

The Book *of* *The "CHEESE"*

TRAITS & STORIES OF A
JOHNSONIAN HAUNT.

Third Edition



LONDON
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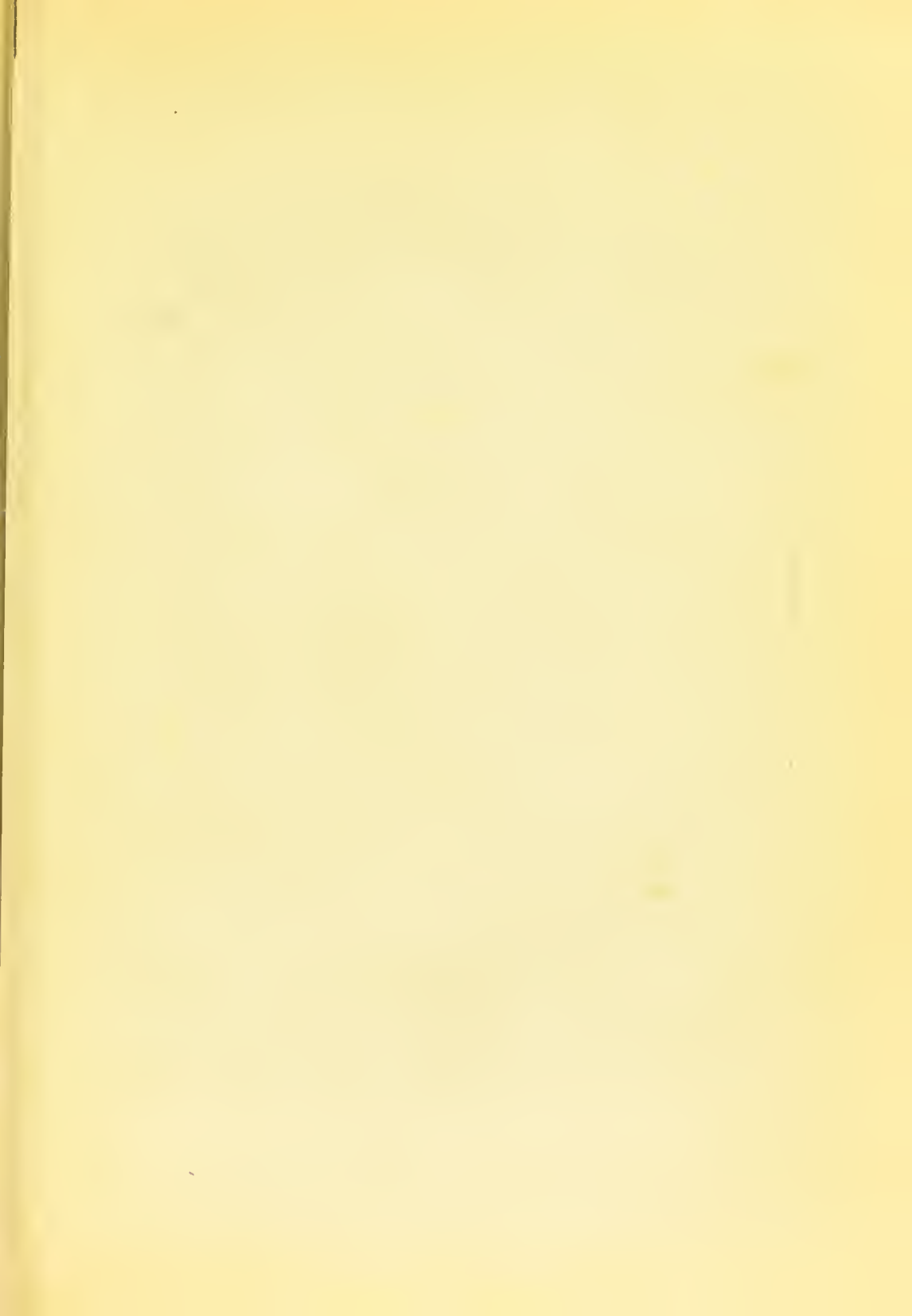
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"TODDY AT THE CHESHIRE CHEESE." By W. Dendy Sadler.
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THE
Book of the Cheese

BEING TRAITS AND STORIES OF

‘Y^E OLDE CHESHIRE CHEESE’

WINE OFFICE COURT, FLEET STREET

LONDON, E.C.

COMPILED BY THE LATE

THOMAS WILSON ^{SV} REID _{-c}

‘Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?’—SHAKESPEARE

THIRD EDITION

REVISED BY

WILLIAM HUSSEY GRAHAM

LONDON

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PREFACE

TO

THE THIRD EDITION

NEARLY fifteen years ago the late Mr. THOMAS WILSON REID, an eminent journalist, sometime manager of the *Sportsman* and afterwards proprietor of the now defunct *London Scottish Journal*, first published the "Traits and Stories of Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese." So popular was the book that it shortly ran into a second edition—an edition which was much enlarged and admirably seen through the press by a well-known Parliamentary reporter, not unknown to fame in journalistic and other circles. A third edition having been called for—very insistently called for by American visitors—it has been my fate and my pleasure to tread—so far as my limited stride would allow, in the footsteps of my friends. The charm of Mr. REID'S work gave the book celebrity on both

sides of the Atlantic, and far-away Australia admitted the seduction of this tavern of the Old Country. The present edition cannot lay claim to all the brilliancy which distinguished the preceding editions. Much matter has been excised because of the exigency of space and the desire to show what the whole English-speaking world thinks of the "Cheshire Cheese." The first chapter remains, with some abbreviation, substantially as it was written by Mr. REID ; the succeeding chapters have been rewritten or rearranged, and the Press of England and America has been called in to supply the deficiencies of the editor.

W. H. G.





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CHAPTER I

EARLY HISTORY OF YE OLDE CHESHIRE CHEESE

Time consecrates ;
And what is grey with age becomes religion.—SCHILLER.

"THANK goodness! ALL the old houses are not gone!" was the hearty expression used the other day by an old countryman, as he and I sat enjoying a delicious rump steak at the Old Cheshire Cheese, Fleet Street. And my old friend chuckled as he raised a foaming tankard of bitter ale to his mouth. "Ah," continued he, "it is forty odd years since I first came about 'The Cheese,' and that ain't yesterday. In that time what

changes have occurred, and what 'improvements' have been made in eating and drinking! Improvements, indeed! Nowadays you are ushered into improved places that are simply gin palaces; and when you order a steak you are supplied with a bit of cork, while your beer resembles in body what I would suppose might be the washings of brewers' aprons. Thank goodness, I repeat, ALL the old houses are not gone; and here's still further prosperity to the Old Cheshire Cheese!" And my old friend had another deep dip into his tankard. But he was not done talking even then. "Forty odd years, I tell you again, ain't yesterday; and during all that time I have been coming about this house. And I can safely say that I never yet got a bad article in the way of food, from a sausage to a rump steak pudding; or in drink, from a half-pint of stout to a bottle of Bass, or from a glass of Marston's bitter to a beaker of Périnet's champagne."

I was somewhat astonished at this ebullition of opinion on the part of my usually taciturn friend; but I soon found the reason. On the previous day he had been in Oxford Street, and, caught in a heavy shower, had taken refuge in a *restaurant* which offered a tempting bill of fare outside. Alas, however, for external appearances! When he got inside he was served, as he said, with "a cork steak, diseased potatoes, bad bread, thin beer, cheap cheese, and brown celery;" the whole having been placed before him "on a dirty tablecloth, by a fast-looking young woman, who wunk and called him 'a jolly old cock!'" So my good old friend, after the fashion of Poe's Raven, ruffled his feathers, and as he departed exclaimed, "Never more!"

Thus my companion set me thinking about old taverns in general, and the Old Cheshire Cheese in particular. I knew it had a history, but I had never even thought of prying into it. At once I resolved that I would take Mrs. Chick's advice, and "make an effort!" And I feel assured that, if the reader will accompany me through the following pages, he may possibly, as I have done, derive not only amusement but instruction from their perusal. Not, be it noted, gentle reader, from anything I myself particularly supply, but from looking over some of the details of the authentic records which I have turned up, and now, in part, reproduce. It would, indeed, be injustice to the ancient tavern itself, and to its present genial and enterprising landlord, were such interesting information in the way of good old "folk-lore" to be lost to tavern-loving posterity. I will only further remark here, in an epigram, the authorship of which, I believe, is unknown :—

Earth has no land,—no land a town, I wis,—
Nor town a house,—nor house a lord,—like this.

.

Although the origin of the Old Cheshire Cheese (formerly spelt "Ye Olde Cheshire Chese") is not altogether involved in obscurity; there is a decided want of complete, or even semi-complete, details as to its very early history.

The reader may remember it was in the Old Cheshire Cheese that the dispute arose about who would most quickly make the best couplet :—

I, Sylvester,
Kiss'd your sister.

When the retort was—

I, Ben Jonson,
Kiss'd your wife.

"But that's not rhyme," said Sylvester. "No," said Jonson; "but it's true." And thus they passed the merry nights, "nor thought of care or woe," although there was plenty of both very much about at the time.

A later poet, Lord Tennyson, himself a frequenter of the "Cheese" in his young days, confesses the influence of "a pint of port," so doubtless his elder brethren, warmed with good cheer, would grow, or imagine they grew

. . . in worth, in wit and sense,
Unboding critic pen,
Or that eternal want of pence
Which vexes public men.

It was in the Old Cheshire Cheese that Isaac Bickerstaff made the epigram—

When late I attempted your pity to move,
What made you so deaf to my prayers?
Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love,
But—why did you kick me down stairs?

In fact, the "Cheese" was famous for epigrammatists. Ah! who would not give a year of his life to sit and listen to the wit and humour of the ancient frequenters of the Old Cheshire Cheese? But the smart things said in the same house, even in the present time of universal genius, are not to be despised. Who would not give a finger off his hand to get a look of the face of the old glutton and scandalmonger to whom, in the "Cheese," the following lines were solemnly presented?—

You say your teeth are dropping out—
A serious cause of sorrow,
Not likely to be cured, I doubt,
To-day, or yet to-morrow.

But good may come of this distress,
While under it you labour,
If, losing teeth, you guzzle less,
And don't backbite your neighbour.

That, in later days, although even the period is now termed "old times," Samuel Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, and other great men were in the habit of frequenting the Old Cheshire Cheese, there can be no manner of doubt. Full well those great men knew what they were about in choosing their place of rendezvous, for I find from a *brochure* entitled "Round London" (1725), that the house is described as "Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese Tavern, near ye Flete Prison, an eating-house for goodly fare." In the time of Charles II. chop and coffee-houses were great political clubs, where men discussed severely the conduct of His Majesty. Harris, in his 'Life of Charles II.,' vol. ii., p. 278, says :—

"1675. It appears that the King afforded the citizens abundant matter for animadversion, and that they indulged themselves in this way so much to his dissatisfaction, and that of his cabal ministry, that a proclamation was issued, December 29, for shutting up and suppressing all coffee-houses—

"'Because in such houses, and by occasion of the meeting of disaffected persons in them, divers false, malicious, and scandalous reports were devised and spread abroad, to the defamation of His Majesty's Government, and to the disturbance of the quiet and peace of the realm.'"



WINE OFFICE COURT—SHOWING THE “CHEESE” ON THE RIGHT

The increase in the number of taverns and wine vaults in the year 1552 engaged the attention of Parliament ; and it was enacted that the number of retailers of wine in London should not exceed forty ; nor those of Westminster exceed three (Stat. 7 Edw. VI. c. 5).

Wine Office Court, where the Cheshire Cheese is situated, took its name from the fact that wine licences were granted in a building close by. The present "wine office" of the Old Cheshire Cheese is exactly at the junction of the court and Fleet Street, the door being the first on the right, as shown in the accompanying beautiful drawing by Mr. Herbert Railton. .





CHAPTER II

JOHNSON AND GOLDSMITH AT THE "CHEESE"

There is nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn.—JOHNSON.

NOT the least delightful characteristic of the "Cheese" is the persistency of its old customers. Those who once have been admitted to its charmed circle soon become wedded to its ways and remain faithful to the house till death do them part, or circumstances scarcely less unpleasant decree their disappearance from the hospitable board. It is not merely to the goodly cheer provided there that this loyalty is due, although, no doubt, to the viands and the wines a share of it is to be attributed. An anecdote of the late Mr. George Augustus Sala, the well known writer, *Daily Telegraph* special correspondent, and genial *bon vivant* and gastronomist, is delightfully illustrative of the attractions of the place from the side of the creature comforts. The story is told by the London correspondent of the *Liverpool Courier* (December 10, 1895) in recording Mr. Sala's death. He writes:

"Some years ago Mr. Sala went to Paris on behalf of the *Daily Telegraph*, to write on the subject of French cooking and French restaurants. Such praise of Parisian kickshaws was never lavished before, and the extollation, to the complete discomfiture of English cooks, lasted for fully six weeks. Everything in the cooking line in Paris was grand, everything in England in the same line was horrible. At the end of the six weeks Mr. Sala returned to London, went immediately to the Cheshire Cheese in Fleet Street, and said to the head waiter—'William, bring me a beefsteak, some potatoes in their jackets, and a pint of ale. I've had nothing to eat for six weeks.'"

The sentimental attractions are equally strong, and their influence is felt even by the most occasional of guests whose situation in life, or whose distance from London, unfortunately precludes the possibility of their being regular attendants at the hostelry. A fine acrostic sent to the landlord by the Rev. Wm. Kerr-Smith, Vicar of Whiteby, Newcastle-on-Tyne, embodies some of the thoughts that naturally arise in the mind of the cultivated visitant :—

C hanged are the times and changed, alas, the guests !
H ow changed from those who erst with gossip stored
E ach day saw grouped about thy cheerful board !
S till are their voices now, whose noisy jests
H ave filled these rooms with laughter. Gathered here
I n rare confusion Beau, and Wit and Sage,
R ich, Poor and Spendthrift, Youth and fuller age
E njoyed whilst yet they might thy festive cheer.

C areless of censure each one told his tale,
H eard the last scandal as he quaffed his ale.
E ager to praise, they scrupled not to school,
E njoyed the folly but condemned the fool.
S o lived they far removed from dulness dire,
E schewed the commonplace and tuned the lyre.



THE MAIN HALL

The guests no doubt, as our reverend rhymers says, have changed ; for good living—even the best the "Cheese" provides—cannot confer an immortality here below. The illustrious guests whose names head this chapter have ceased to be, yet the "Cheese" is redolent with memories of them, though to that spirit of affection for the house of which I have spoken we are indebted for the evidence which proves beyond the possibility of cavil their constant attendance there.

Goldsmith's lodging was at No. 6 Wine Office Court, nearly opposite the "Cheese," and here he wrote the "Vicar of Wakefield." Johnson's house, where the Dictionary was compiled, was within a minute's walk, in Gough Square. Boswell does not record any visits to the "Cheese," but Boswell's acquaintance with Johnson began when Johnson was an old man, when he had given up the house in Gough Square, and Goldsmith had long departed from Wine Office Court. At the best, Boswell only knew Johnson's life in widely separated sections. Boswell was in Edinburgh while Johnson was in Bolt Court, and it is certain Johnson wrote no diary for the benefit of his biographer. Witnesses who were on the spot supply the deficiency. In the first edition of this work Mr. Reid gave some interesting extracts from a little book published by Mr. Cyrus Jay in 1868. The book was entitled "The Law—What I have Seen, Heard and Known," and was dedicated to "The lawyers and gentlemen with whom I have dined for more than half a century at the Old Cheshire Cheese, Wine Office Court, Fleet Street." The somewhat garrulous old gentleman in his preface says : "During the fifty-three years that I have frequented



THE STAIRWAY TO THE FIRST FLOOR

the Cheshire Cheese Tavern . . . there have been only three landlords. When I first visited the house I used to meet several very old gentlemen who remembered Dr. Johnson nightly at the Cheshire Cheese ; and they have told me, what is not generally known, that the Doctor, whilst living in the Temple, always went to the Mitre or the Essex Head ; but when he removed to Gough Square and Bolt Court he was a constant visitor at the Cheshire Cheese, because nothing but a hurricane would have induced him to cross Fleet Street." Mr. Jay's fifty-three years, from 1868, take us back to 1815, or little more than a quarter of a century after the death of Johnson. But who then was Mr. Jay, and what was his credibility ? " I have heard," says Dr. Birkbeck Hill, that indefatigable inquirer into Johnsonian facts and dates, " a member of our (the Johnson) club relate that, when he was a student of law, there used to be pointed out to him in the Cheshire Cheese an old gentleman who, day after day, was always to be found there, prolonging his dinner by an unbroken succession of glasses of gin and water. It was as a kind of awful warning of the depths to which a lawyer might sink, that this toper was shown, and it was added in a whisper that he was the son of Jay, of Bath. Jay, of Bath, is well-nigh forgotten now, but during the first half of the present century his fame as a preacher stood exceedingly high. It was Cyrus Jay, his son, who for fifty-three years frequenting this ancient tavern, preserved and handed down this curious tradition of Johnson. The landlord has told me how, in his childhood, he used to hear in the distance the gruff voice of the old gentleman as he came along Fleet Street, and how sometimes he was sent to see Mr. Jay

safe home to his chambers in Serjeants' Inn, hard by. For most of his long life, port, that medium liquor, neither like claret for boys nor brandy for heroes, but the drink for men, had been his favourite beverage. A failing income brought him down at last to gin and water. He used to comfort himself by the reflection that he could get twice as drunk for half the money. He dined in the tavern to the very end. One evening he was led home to his lodgings, and within four-and-twenty hours he was dead. He was the last frequenter of the Old Cheshire Cheese who knew the men who had known Johnson. Mine host remembers a still older guest, Dr. Pooley by name, a barrister, who died about 1856, at the age of eighty. Night after night for many a long year he had dined at half-past seven to the minute on a 'follower,' the end chop of the loin. He, too, used to tell of the men of his younger days, who boasted that they had often spent an evening there with Dr. Samuel Johnson."

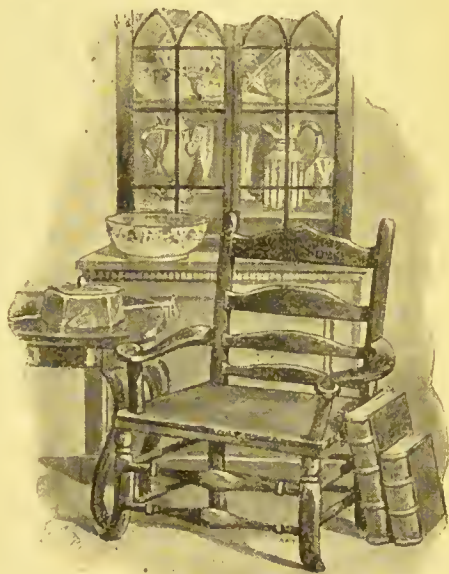
Another writer, Mr. C. Redding, in his "Fifty Years' Recollections, Literary and Personal," published in 1858, takes us a little further back. He says:—

"I often dined at the Cheshire Cheese. Johnson and his friends, I was informed, used to do the same, and I was told I should see individuals who had met them there. This I found to be correct. The company was more select than in later times. Johnson had been dead about twenty years, but there were Fleet Street tradesmen who well remembered both Johnson and Goldsmith in this place of entertainment."

Mr. Redding proceeds to name many of the friends he met, but their personalities are not even pale shadows, only mere names, of importance to

no one in this generation. More interesting is the information Mr. Redding gives, that "The left-hand room, entering the 'Cheshire,' and the table on the extreme right upon entering that room, was the table occupied by Johnson and his friends almost uniformly. This table and the room are now as they were when I first saw them, having had the curiosity to visit them recently. They were, and are still, as Johnson and his friends left them in their time. Goldsmith sat at Johnson's left hand." But the public room on the ground floor was not the only place affected by Johnson and his friends.

When they wished to retire from the madding crowd a little room on another floor supplied all the privacy they occasionally desired, and here to this day is carefully preserved the chair from which the Doctor thundered his *ex cathedra* denunciations.



DR. JOHNSON'S CHAIR





CHAPTER III

AN AMERICAN ON THE "CHEESE"

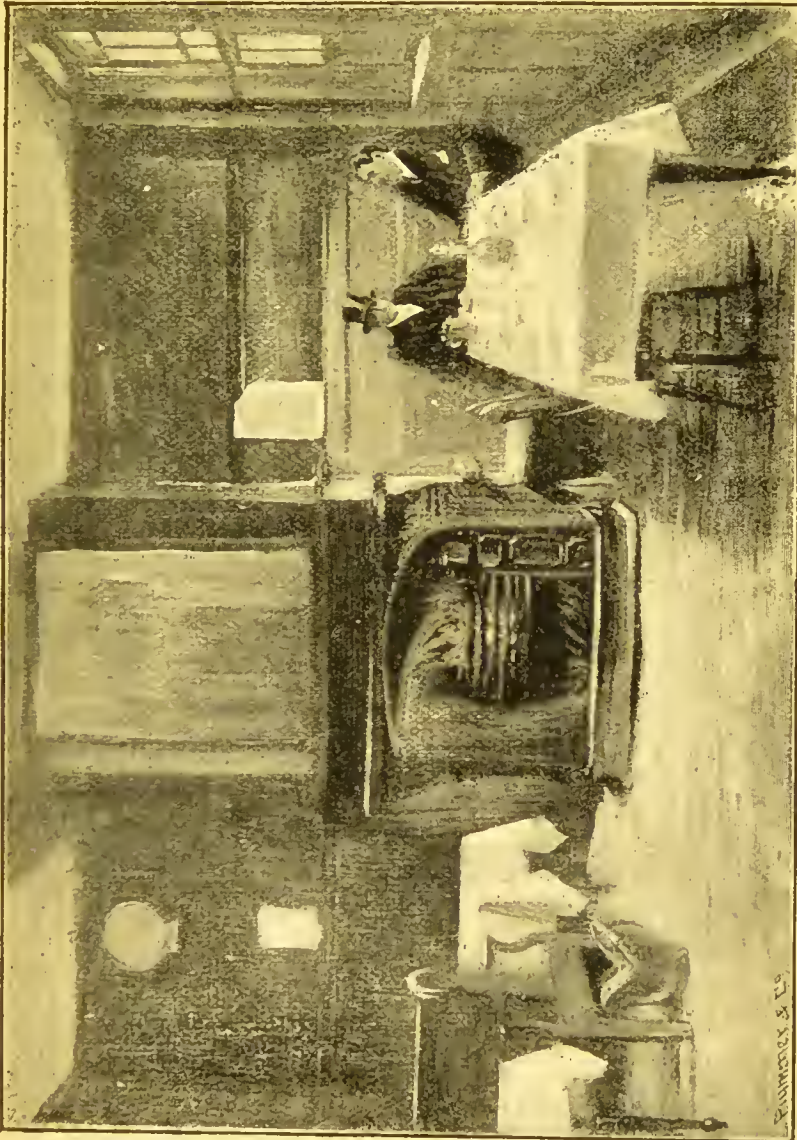
Hard by there is the Cheshire Cheese,
A famous tap.—T. HOOD.

ON page 57 appears a picture, not a very serious effort of art, albeit a truthful representation of Fleet Street, which shows the entrance to the famous Wine Office Court. In the first chapter we were dining with a friend distinguished for his rural simplicity. Now you must learn how we reached the guest chamber. On page 10 is a drawing of the main hall, with the bar on the left, and on the right the ancient stair, at the bottom of which a flood of light marks the way to *l'Amphitryon où l'on dine*.

Entering the dining-room we are confronted with a view something like the sketch on p. 17.

The sketch on p. 19 gives the appearance of the room on the opposite side.

These two sketches, lightly limned by the unerring pencil of Mr. Seymour Lucas, A.R.A., hang upon the walls, and are the basis upon which the artist built up his great picture of the Cheshire Cheese, exhibited

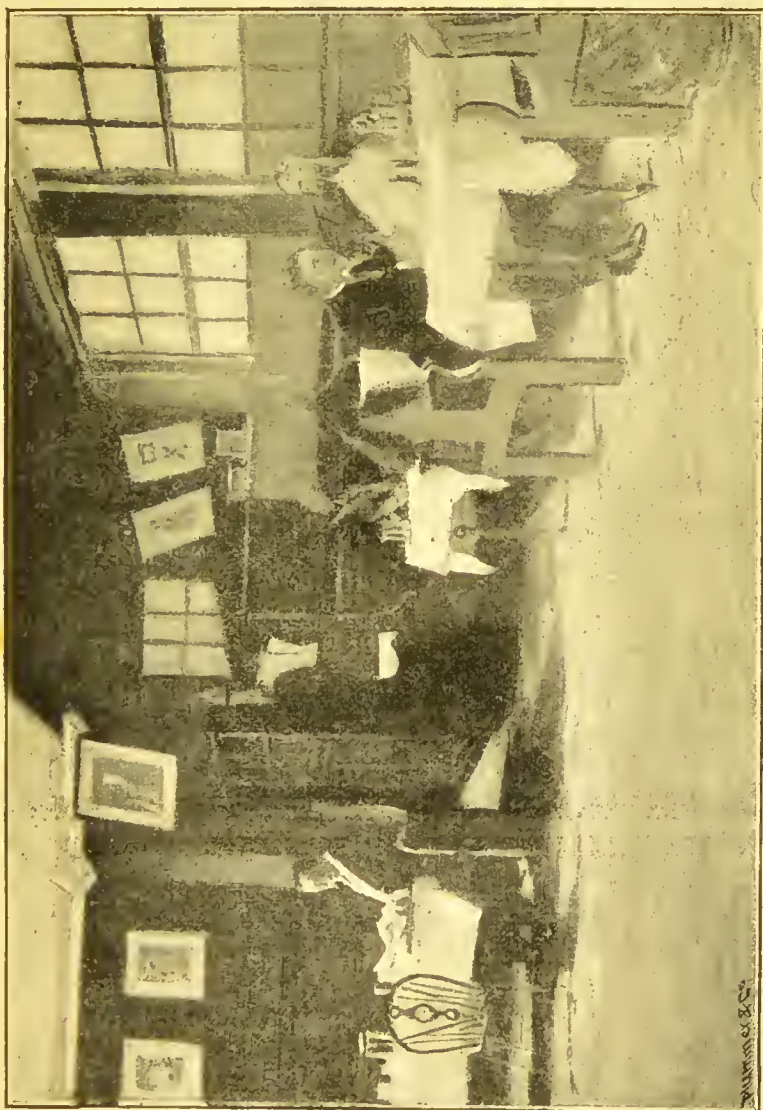


THE JOHNSONIAN CORNER
By SEYMOUR LUCAS A.R.A.

at the Royal Academy in 1887. The Academy picture is not in the "Cheese," but the following is a description of it from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of March 29, 1887: "It represents a scene in the Old Cheshire Cheese inn, and is entitled 'The Latest Scandal.' In one corner of the quaint old room, on the bench which is still pointed out as the place where Dr. Johnson used to sit, we see a typical group of the wits of the period. Some wear powder, while others have the full dark wigs of an older fashion still. One of the group, in the uniform of the Guards, is relating the latest scandal to the rest, and pointing over his shoulder towards two young beaux, who stand by the fireside. One of these wears his right arm in a sling, and has evidently come to grief in a duel on the previous night. He and his friend are mightily disconcerted to discover that their escapade has become the talk of the town, and that it is affording vast amusement to this group of scandal-mongers."

Below the original sketches hangs a photograph giving a pale idea of the picture. In the first sketch behold in the corner—the Johnsonian corner—"the counterfeit presentment of two brothers"—the brothers Moore, one the genial manager, the other his legal adviser, a limb of the law.

By far the finest picture of the "Cheese" as it appeared in the days of Johnson, is that by Mr. Dendy Sadler, exhibited in the Royal Academy last year (1895), and which we are enabled, by the courtesy of Mr. L. H. Lefèvre, 1A King Street, St. James's, to reproduce as the frontispiece to this book. "Toddy at the Cheshire Cheese" needs no description, and its excellence will be appreciated by everyone whose soul is open to artistic impressions.



THE "COSY CORNER"
By SEYMOUR LUCAS, A.R.A.

The sketches by Mr. Lucas naturally do not pretend to give detail, and Mr. Sadler's picture rather shows the room as it was. The clock in the meantime has been moved to make room for the portrait of the Lexicographer, after Sir Joshua Reynolds. The drawing on next page is a faithful, or an almost faithful, representation of the existing condition of the celebrated chamber. The mutability of life is even exhibited in the "Cheese," for over the mantelpiece we see a kindly caricature of Sir Augustus Harris, the great manager of Drury Lane, who has been within these recent weeks all too early snatched from our midst.

You have now seen the dining-room from two points of view ; let me present it from another—that of Mr. Joseph Pennell, the well known artist, whose drawings in *Harper's Weekly* I grieve to be unable to present here. His pen must accordingly make amends for the absence of his pencil. Writing in the number of November 12, 1887, he says :—

"On my first coming to London, I had fortified myself, not with a course of English history, but by re-reading 'Pickwick.' My first Sunday morning, about one o'clock, I found myself in Chancery Lane, outside of the entrance to Lincoln's Inn, in the company of the proverbial solitary policeman and convivial cat. On my asking the policeman where in the world I could get something to eat—as it is well known one must starve in London on Sunday before one and after three—he gave me the inevitable answer, 'Down to the bottom, first to your left, under the lamp, up the passage, and there you are!' After he had repeated these mysterious directions two or three times, and had found me hopelessly

ignorant of his meaning, he did what I have very seldom known a London policeman to do—a proof of his loneliness ; he walked to the end of Chancery Lane with me, and there being no one on Fleet Street, pointed out the sign of the Cheshire Cheese. . . . A push at the door, and I have passed into another world. I was in a narrow hall, at the far



JOHNSON'S PORTRAIT AND SEAT

end of which was a quaint bar, where, framed in by small panes, were two very pretty, but I cannot say fascinating, barmaids—I never could be fascinated by the ordinary English barmaid. Suddenly a waiter with a very short nose came out of another room and screamed up the stairs: 'Cotherum steak. Boatherum foozlum mash. Fotherum coozlum, botherum steak !'

and then remarked to me: 'Lunch, sir? Yes, sir. Thank you, sir. What can I get you, sir? Steak, sir; chop, sir; kidney, sir; potatoes, sir, cooked in their jackets, sir? Yes, sir; thank you, sir.' Then up the stairs he added: 'Underdone steak one!' Then to me again: 'Walk in, sir. Take a seat, sir. Paper, sir? *Lloyds*, sir? *Reynolds*, sir? Yes, sir.' . . .

"I had begun to look around me. I found I had stumbled on just what I had determined to make a hunt for. I was in one of the greenbaize curtained boxes into which Mr. Pickwick was always dropping under the guidance of Sam Weller, whose 'knowledge of London was extensive and peculiar.' Unless you have a Sam Weller at your elbow you will not very easily find the Cheshire Cheese, the last of the London chop-houses, even though it is in Baedeker. In the opposite corner was, not Mr. Pickwick, but one of those respectable shabby old gentlemen you never see outside of London. The waiter asked him, in the same confidential tone, 'if he would not have a half-bitter; if he would not like to see yesterday's *Times*? A most interestin' article in it, sir, Mr. Price, sir.' Then Mr. Price's half-bitter came in a dented old pewter pot, and along with it an exaggerated wine-glass; and Mr. Price held the pewter in the air, and a softly murmuring stream flowed from the one into the other. Beyond the box I was in I saw other hard straight-backed seats, and between them other most beautifully clean, white cloth-covered tables, at all of which were three or four rather quiet and sedate, but after their manner, sociable Englishmen, everybody seeming to know everybody else in the place. Everything seemed happy, even to the cat purring on the hearth, and the brass kettle singing

on the hob. Perhaps I should except the restless waiter, who, when anyone came in, rushed to the bottom of the stairs and gave his unearthly yell. Soon down the same stairs came the translation of the yell in the shape of the steak I had ordered, and with it the potatoes in their jackets, all on old blue willow-ware plates (see illustration, p. 62).

"'Your steak, sir. Yes, sir. Anything else, sir? Napkin, sir? Oh, serviette! Yes, sir. All Americans like them, sir.'

"And so I found for the first time that napkins and bread, freely bestowed in decent restaurants at home, are in England looked upon as costly luxuries.

"The old gentleman by this time was ready to go. 'Mac!' he called.

"'Yes, sir. Chops, potatoes, and bread, sixteen pence, sir. Anything to drink? Half-bitter, sir? One-and-seven, sir.'

"'Make it one-and-nine, Mac.'

"'Yes, sir. Thank you, sir. Morning, sir.'

"I wondered what he meant by making it one-and-nine. But shortly after it was my turn, and something like this went on.

"'Steak, potatoes, and bread, sixteen pence, sir. One-and-six, sir.'

"'No bread, sir? Right, sir. One-and-eight, sir. Two-shilling piece, sir? Right, sir. Morning, sir.'

"'But I had no bread.'

"Then a fearful gloom fell on his countenance. As I walked toward the door where the other waiter was standing he announced in a voice so loud that the 'Ullomullum de loodle wumblejum' being shouted up the stairs was nothing to it, and everyone stopped reading and looked up. 'James, the gentle-

man hasn't given me anythink, but he desires to give you somethink.' Then I understood what to make it one-and-nine meant. I felt in my pocket. I had but a shilling, but I put it in his hand and ran, followed by the roar that only happy and pleased Englishmen can give.

"Although my first experience ended so disastrously, financially and every other way, I have returned again and again to the Cheshire Cheese, and have, moreover, tried to induce others to go there with me. For if the place is not haunted, as it is said to be, by the shades of Ben Jonson and Herrick, of Samuel Johnson and Boswell, the waiter is perfectly willing, for a consideration, to point out to you the stains of their wigs on the wall. It is certain that Dickens, Forster, Tom Hood, Wilkie Collins, and many other worthies did frequent it, while Sala periodically puffs it, and a host of other lights have written about it. In my own small way I have endeavoured to lead some modern junior novelists and poets there, to show them how near they could come to some of the great masters whom they apparently worship so thoroughly. But on the only occasion when I succeeded in placing one probably in the seat of Goldsmith or Herrick, he sniffed at the chops and remarked that if Johnson had had a napkin it would have been better for his personal appearance.

"I hardly know myself what is the attraction of the place, for you can only get chops and steaks, kidneys and sausages, or on Saturdays a gigantic pudding, to eat your money's worth of which you must have the appetite of a Gargantua, or, on Shrove Tuesdays, pancakes. If you should happen to want anything else, you would probably get the answer

which Mr. Sala says was given to a friend of his who asked for a hard-boiled egg with his salad: 'A hegg! If Halbert Hedward 'imself wuz to cum 'ere he couldn't 'ave a hegg.' Whoever really cares to see the last of the Old London chop-houses, let him, when next in London, look up the sign of YE OLDE CHESHYRE CHEESE."

The story told by Mr. Pennell of the rapacity of the waiter is probably to be considered as an outburst of American humour, at least it should be taken *cum grano*. The lightning calculator has been popularly located in many a house of public resort; he is legion as well as legendary. "Twenty-five years ago, I know," says "W. M." in the *Realm*, "he flourished at Evans's Supper Rooms in the good old days of Paddy Green and the boy glee-singers, with their Eton jackets and shiny faces. 'John'—so, I think, he was called—stood near the exit and took our money as we went out. Mr. W. S. Gilbert was an occasional visitor to the rooms, and he objected very much to John's peculiar system of arithmetic, and determined to punish him in the matter of tips. One evening on leaving the place his bill amounted to half a crown. This he gave to the 'lightning calculator,' handing him at the same time a single penny by way of *pourboire*. With a polite bow and a deprecating smile, John handed back the insufficient copper, saying, in his most considerate tone, '*Perhaps, sir, you may be going over a bridge!*' At that time there was a toll for crossing Waterloo Bridge, which rendered the force of the sarcasm additionally unpleasant. The story was told me by poor William Brunton, the artist, who said he was present on the occasion."

This story has no connection with the "Cheese," but it may be read as a footnote to Mr. Pennell's history, and it is quite possible, now that Evans's has gone the way that all mundane things eventually go, that some ingenious individual may endeavour to father the sarcasm on a waiter of the "Cheese;" but let us hope that this veracious anecdote will prevent such an attempt, for no one acquainted with the place could suppose that, however ready "Cheese" waiters may be as reckoners, they would descend to add insult to imposition.





CHAPTER IV

AN ENGLISH LADY'S DESCRIPTION

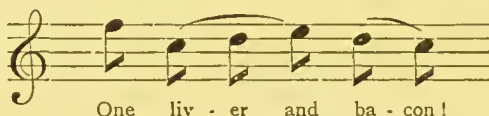
A tavern is the busy man's recreation, the idle man's business, the melancholy man's sanctuary, the stranger's welcome, the inn's-of-court man's entertainment, the scholar's kindness, and the citizen's courtesy.—BISHOP EARLE.

MR. PENNELL, as a visitor from across the herring-pond, has been here allowed priority in giving what the French call his appreciations. Now we may hear what an English lady has to say.

In the meantime, although the scene remains the same, the former actors have left the stage. The subtle arithmetician "Mac" gave place to the less voluble and preciser Coles, and he again, after some ten years of service, has earned his *otium cum dignitate*. His successor, Worth—a most worthy successor—will probably in another quarter of a century retire a millionaire. All "Cheese" waiters become millionaires—that has been the order up till now. But "our little systems have their day, they have their day and

cease to be." The "Cheese," averse from change as it may be, has no longer any otherum botherum mashes on order, eggs are no longer taboo, dishes then unknown to Mr. Pennell have been added, table napkins are acclimatised, the English tongue is so spoken as to be even understood of an American, and gravity presides where levity used to reign.

True, the orders have still to be called upstairs to the kitchen, but the tone has changed, and the cacophonous shout is replaced by something like the following, which was taken down by a professor of the Guildhall School of Music as it was sung up the stair by the unconscious head-waiter :—

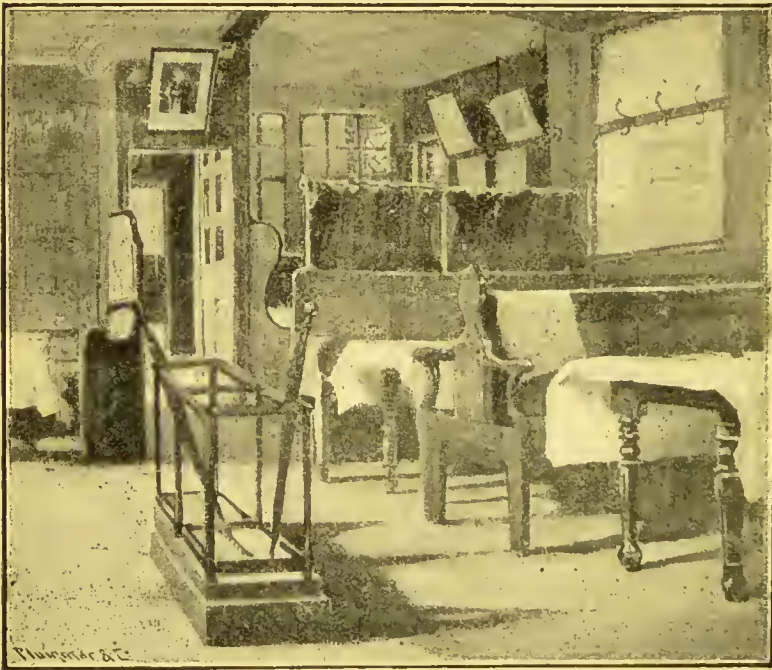


Turning from the stair this melodious songster, his visage clad in wreathed smiles, is ready to receive the visitors about to be introduced, ay, prepared to anticipate their every wish. But the "English lady"? I do not know whether I ought not to beg her pardon for giving precedence to the evidence of a gentleman, but she doubtless will remember that the orators of the politest nation in the world always address their mixed audiences as "Messieurs et Mesdames," and will forgive me as she probably forgives a scientific member of the House of Lords, who adopts the French fashion of placing the Lords of Creation in their duly pre-eminent positions. In the *World* of August 31, 1892, "Ina," who will be generally recognised as the brilliant Lady Colin Campbell, writes :—

"It is August, London is empty, and we are

bored ; yet dine we must somewhere, and where to go is the difficulty. Everybody one knows is either at Homburg or Cowes, so we cannot possibly go to the Savoy or the Amphitryon. There is nothing more utterly stupid than to visit the haunts of society after society has left, and to find them peopled by the unknown—good creatures in their way, no doubt, but not exactly *des nôtres* ; not fashionably dressed enough to admire, nor ridiculously dressed enough to be amusing, and the affairs of whom we cannot discuss, for the simple reason that we know nothing about them, good, bad, or indifferent. How strange it is to think that only a short time ago no lady would ever have dreamed of dining at a London restaurant ! Then a few somewhat fast people set the fashion of supping at some public place instead of their own homes ; and now there is probably no inhabitant of Mayfair or Belgravia, with any pretensions to smartness, who has not at some time or other either dined or supped at one of the many fashionable cafés which have sprung up in various parts of the town, and have become for a time the rage, only to be displaced by some newer, more pretentious, and more expensive restaurant, to which people flock, quite as much to see and discuss each other, as they do to discuss the delicacies provided for them by the latest celebrated *chef* imported direct from Paris. But, as I said before, dine we must somewhere ; and dining at a restaurant being depressing, and dining at home dull, we are just turning over in our minds what we had best do under the circumstances, when there comes a loud peal at the front door bell. We all start up, and"—and, to abridge Lady Colin's narrative, three ladies and three gentlemen find them-

selves in Fleet Street "in front of a little narrow alley, suggestive (to me) of robbery and murder. Here we alight, and, with many apologies for the shabbiness of the entrance, our host conducts us—by the back way by mistake—into our dining place. A flare of unshaded gas lights up a small, old-fashioned



WHERE "INA" SAT WITH HER FRIENDS

room, the floor of which is covered with sawdust. The ceiling is white, with projecting cross-beams, and at one side of the room is a long oak table, at which Johnson, Goldsmith, and a few other choice spirits were wont to sit and feed ; and here, it is said, originated the well-known riddle about the number of

beef steaks it would take to reach the moon. All along one side of the room are wooden partitions, exactly like old-fashioned pews, with hard, cushionless seats. One of our party says, as she sits down, that she feels as if she were in church; we devoutly wished she would *behave* a little more as though she were there, long before the evening was over; but reaction having set in, we are all, I fear, in a terribly frivolous humour, not by any means in keeping with the solemn respectability of our surroundings, for we are told that this chop-house has been in existence ever since the year 1667, and is no ephemeral mushroom-house of the hour, to be sought out one day and forgotten the next. There is also an old-fashioned, not to say antediluvian air about the other diners, quite in keeping with the antiquity of the place, and I fear they must be not a little shocked at our light jests and trivial conversation, carried on in no modulated tone of voice. Our pew just holds six comfortably, and we sit down three and three, opposite each other, on either side of a very narrow table covered with a spotless white cloth. We have willow-pattern plates, large and hot for the meat, and small and cold, each with a pat of butter on it, for our potatoes. First, we have thick slices of hot ham, the lean tender and pink, and the fat succulent with an immense dish of the most delicious peas I ever ate, and young potatoes served in their jackets. Anyone who has tasted a fresh-run salmon which has been green-kipped, and has compared it with the hard, salt fish that is cured for the London market, will appreciate the difference between an ordinary ham and one that is prepared for immediate consumption. These Yorkshire were not intended for keeping, and, as the cook afterwards

informed us, were all eaten up in a day. I could easily have believed her if she had said one was eaten up at every meal, judging by the thickness of the slices to which we were helped, and the amount we were supposed to eat of them. The next dish is a point steak, rosy without being *saignant*, accompanied by fresh dishes of young peas and potatoes.

"I was by this time beginning to feel thoroughly uncomfortable, owing to the want of some sort of stuffing to my seat, and I leaned first on one elbow, then on the other, then back against the hard wood, then upright again; but all in vain, for no change of position gave me even momentary relief, and I longed to get one of the evening papers, of which there was a plentiful supply hanging over the back of the pews, and to fill it with the shavings out of the grate, roll it up into a cushion, and sit upon it. Anyone, unless they have spent their lives in a velvet arm-chair, as I have, might think me fanciful; but I can assure them I was quite miserable, and could not even get through my 'buck rabbit.' At last I appealed to our host, and asked him if he could not get me a cushion; upon which he in turn appealed to the waiter, and never shall I forget the waiter's expression, and never did I feel more completely snubbed than when he answered slowly and solemnly, without a smile on his pallid face, 'Sir, this is the "Olde Cheshire Cheese."' He said not another word, and though we did not exactly understand the connection between the cushion and the Cheshire Cheese, a subdued silence fell upon us all, as we turned over his meaning in our minds; and we felt a little small, as one does when one cannot see the point of some clever joke.

"After the remains of the buck rabbits have been

removed, our somewhat eccentric dinner is brought to a close by a bowl of rum punch, accompanied by six long churchwarden pipes and a glass full of bird's-eye tobacco. We wonder if the ladies who usually dine at 'Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese' are in the habit of finishing off their meal with a pipe ; but unfortunately have no means of ascertaining what is the correct thing to do, as the only other female in the place is dining behind a curtain in the far corner of the room. I own to having been tempted into trying some umber-scented cigarettes which were brought me specially from Algiers ; but I am not an habitual smoker, and am bound to confess I would have much preferred to suck bon-bons, or even to eat ripe green-gages, than to fill my mouth with nasty tobacco smoke. Still there is always something very fascinating about a long white pipe, it looks so clean-limbed and nice ; and I turn over in my mind whether I dare ask the waiter for some soap-and-water for the more obvious purpose of blowing bubbles with it. I am afraid, however, to venture after our late snubbing over the cushion, and it is just possible also that the other occupiers of the room might object to having soap-bubbles floating about over their heads and bursting in their eyes ; so after mature deliberation, I decide that by far the best use to make of my pipe is to drink my punch through it."



CHAPTER V

ABOUT THE PUDDING

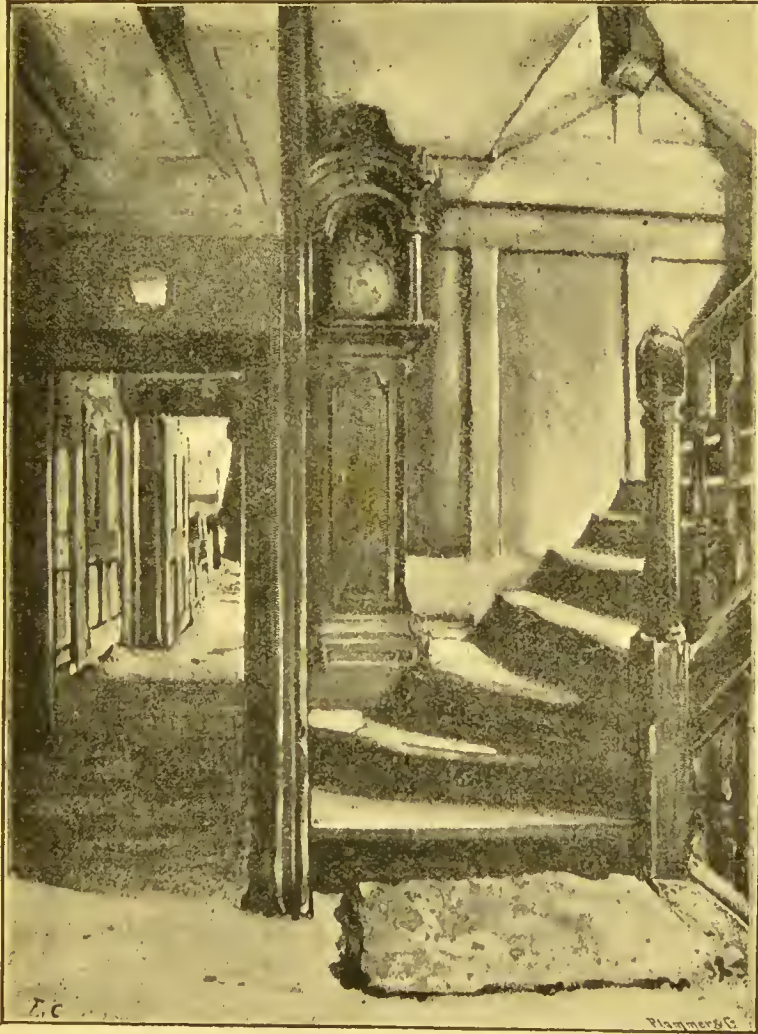
Now, good digestion wait on appetite
And health on both.—SHAKESPEARE.

"How do you make it?" asked a fair American of the proprietor, with the amiable curiosity we somehow expect in our transatlantic cousins.

The answer is not recorded, for in the manner of making chiefly lies the specialty of the Old Cheshire Cheese. The hand of the proprietor himself compounds the ingredients in a secret room, secure from the gaze of even his most inquisitive attendants.

Yet when we look on the immense bowl from which sixty or seventy people are to be fed, one cannot wonder at the lady's desire to know how such a Brobdingnagian dish could be so exquisitely prepared.

The proportions of the bowl are emblematic of the profusion in which its contents are dispensed, and the edacity of a veritable Gargantua would find itself vanquished in presence of the "Cheese" hospitality.



WILLIAM'S ROOM IN THE DISTANCE

Hunger flies affrighted from the board, and no guest ever had occasion to murmur as the writer had at a popular dining place when, at the conclusion of his lunch, he handed to the manager this impromptu parody :

To lunch with —— is all the art I know,
To make men hungry—and to keep them so.

The tendency at the "Cheese" is all the other way. Soft purrings of delight take the place of the angry growls of the disappointed. It is not a question with how little you can be put off; it is a point of honour to induce you to consume pudding to the very limit of human capacity.

Old "William," for many years the head waiter, could only be seen in his real glory on Pudding Days. He used to consider it his duty to go round the tables insisting that the guests should have second or third, ay, and with wonder be it spoken, fourth helpings.

"Any gentleman say pudden?" was his constant query; and his habit was not broken when a crusty customer growled :

"No *gentleman* says pudden."

William either never saw the point or, with that greatness of soul which lends indifference to the true waiter, disdained to make reply or essay amendment. William, like many of his customers, has passed away, but a room is consecrated to his memory and called by his name. And if the saying of "pudden" is now less frequent, the eating still proceeds apace. Much has been said and sung in its praise. It has been apotheosised and eaten. Delightful simplicity of worship!

A complete anthology of the laudatory prose and verse would surpass all modest bounds, would, in fact, run to seed, and will not here be attempted. A restrictive policy must therefore be adopted, and the reader asked to judge of the mass by the samples.

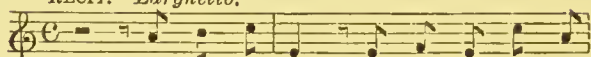
In "Ye Lay of Ye Lost Minstrel," printed in the *West London Observer* (April 1890), are a number of lightly skipping verses all in praise of the "Cheese," but too long to quote. The author, Mr. William Henderson, knows his "Cheese," and we present a sample of his style :

If you'd dine at your ease
Try "Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese."
At this famous resort
In the Wine Office Court
Kickshaws, entrées or slops
You'll not get, but the chops,
Devil'd kidneys and steaks,
He will say who partakes
Are all second to none—
To a turn they are done !
But the pudding !—oh my !
You look on with a sigh,
As it comes piping hot
From the caldron or pot,—
Oh the savour, the taste,
Of its lining, its paste !
How it wells ! how it swells !
In its bosom there dwells
Food for gods, meat for men,
Who resort to Moore's den.

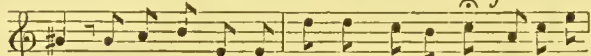
In a parody appropriate to the sentiments of those who scorn the foreign yoke, Mr. Henderson gives us the following song, inscribed to Beaufoy A. Moore, and published by Mr. J. H. Wadsworth of Boston (U.S.A.), who also provides the accompaniment.

De Pudding's Requiem.

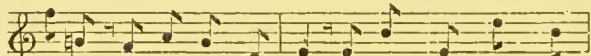
RECIT. *Larghetto.*



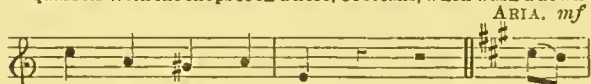
Wesought "The Cheese," With thirst and hun - ger



prest, And own we love the Pud-ding Day the best. But no one

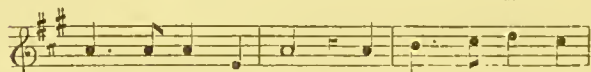


quarrels With the chops cook'd here, Orsteaks, when wash'd down



by Old Eng - lish heer!

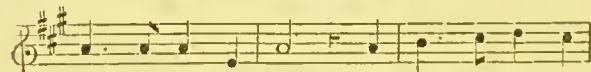
1. 'Twas
2. And



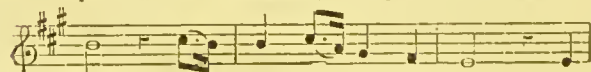
on Saint An-drew's day, Our way thro' Fleet Street
now the wai - ters pour prime "Burton" foam-ing



lay; We snif'd the pud - ding then! We
o'er "Old Wil - liam" marks his prey! No



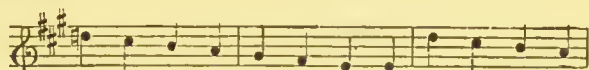
scorn'd all fo - reign fare, True Bri - tish food was
tips that wai - ter claimed, Long be that wai - ter



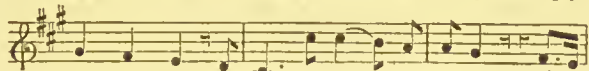
there, To "cut and come a - gen." Our
famed, Who smiles and makes it pay! Not

About the Pudding

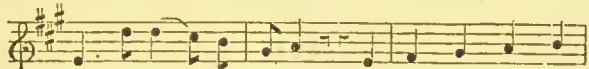
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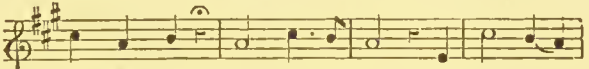
landlord carved with manner grave, Brave portions to each
dear - ly was that pudding bought, For ev - 'ry hun - gry



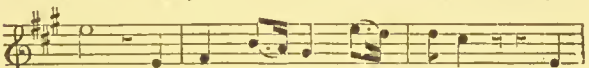
guest he gave, Northoughthe of his boo-ty, Nor
Bri - ton sought A "fol - low" from that beauty, A



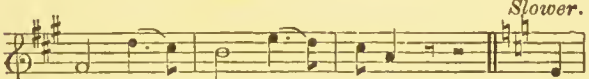
thought he of his boo-ty. A - long the boards the
"fol - low" from that beauty. With plate on plate each



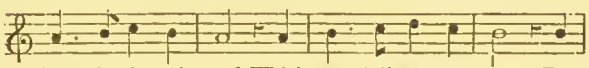
sig - nal ran, "Char - lie" ex - pects that ev - 'ry
wai - ter ran; "Char - lie" confessed that ev 'ry



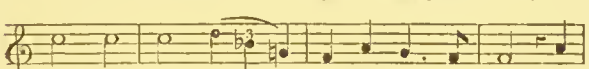
man will pay and do his du-ty, Will
man that day had done his du-ty, That



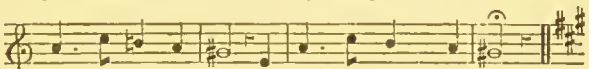
pay and do his du-ty. At
day had done his du-ty.



last the fa - tal sound, Which spread dismay a - round, The



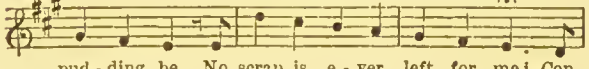
pud - ding's off, the . pudding's off at last! "The



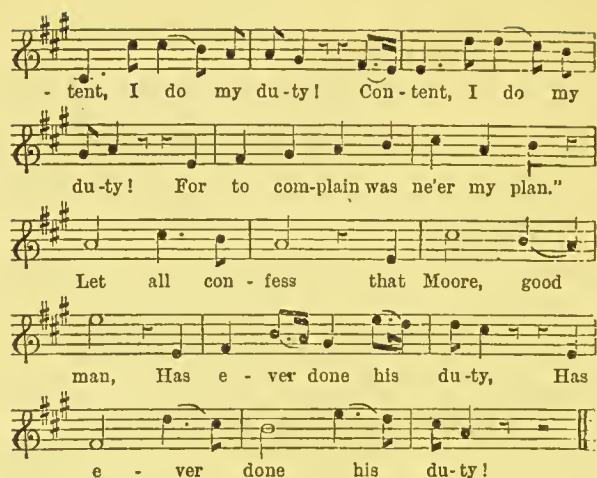
vic - t'ry's on your side, The day's your own," Moore cried l



"I serve and have to fast! How - e - ver large that
slentando.



pud - ding be, No scrap is e - ver left for me! Con -



1890.

W. H.

The "Cheese" pudding is not restricted in its sphere of influence. Hundreds are sent out every year to all parts of London, and, indeed, England. Some even have found their way to the United States, imported direct from "The Cheese" by enthusiastic Americans. The following extract from the *Court Journal* of April 4, 1891, describes the misadventures of one owing to the operation of the McKinley Act. "The London lark pudding is renowned in many lands. The travelled American speaks with rapture of that lark pudding he partook of in Fleet Street. Mr. Burras, of New York, requested that such a lark pudding should be sent out to him from London, so that the stay-at-home ones might partake of the British culinary luxury. The delicacy duly arrived, the guests who were to aid Mr. Burras in eating it were duly invited—all was ready, indeed, when an unexpected difficulty arose. The Customs House

authorities declined to give it up until the question as to what duty 'lark pudding' was liable was settled. The McKinley Bill does not mention lark pudding. It takes cognisance of canned goods and potted meats, certainly ; but larks in a pudding were unclassified, and they said it did not come under the head of manufactured articles, because it was food in a natural state. A week has elapsed while the authorities have been debating the point, and in the meantime the lark pudding is most probably turning sour, and Mr. Burras and his friends dancing with indignation. More trouble will ensue over this lark pudding, no doubt, than did upon the opening of the four-and-twenty-blackbird pie of yore ! It may cause the establishment of Free Trade in the States."

It is satisfactory to be able to state that the pudding eventually passed the Customs House none the worse for its detention. The guests were eloquent in its praise, and several of them have since visited England merely to track the pudding to the place of its nativity.





CHAPTER VI

CALLED TO THE BAR

If on thy theme I rightly think,
There are five reasons why men drink :
Good wine, a friend, because I'm dry,
At least, I should be by-and-bye,
Or any other reason why.—H. ALDRICH.

ABOUT ten o'clock one sharp frosty morning many years ago a short yet pleasant dialogue took place—probably many such had taken place—between old friends in Fleet Street.

“Tam, is it too early to have a drink?”

“Yes, decidedly!—and besides, I have just had twa.”

An adjournment was incontinently made to the Cheshire Cheese. I was invited to accompany my seniors, and the first editor of this “Book of the Cheese” introduced his present unworthy successor to that mysterious and subdued corner of the journalistic paradise. From the “Cheese” point of view it was still early morn, and little was stirring except the hot whisky with lemon and sugar which was to constitute



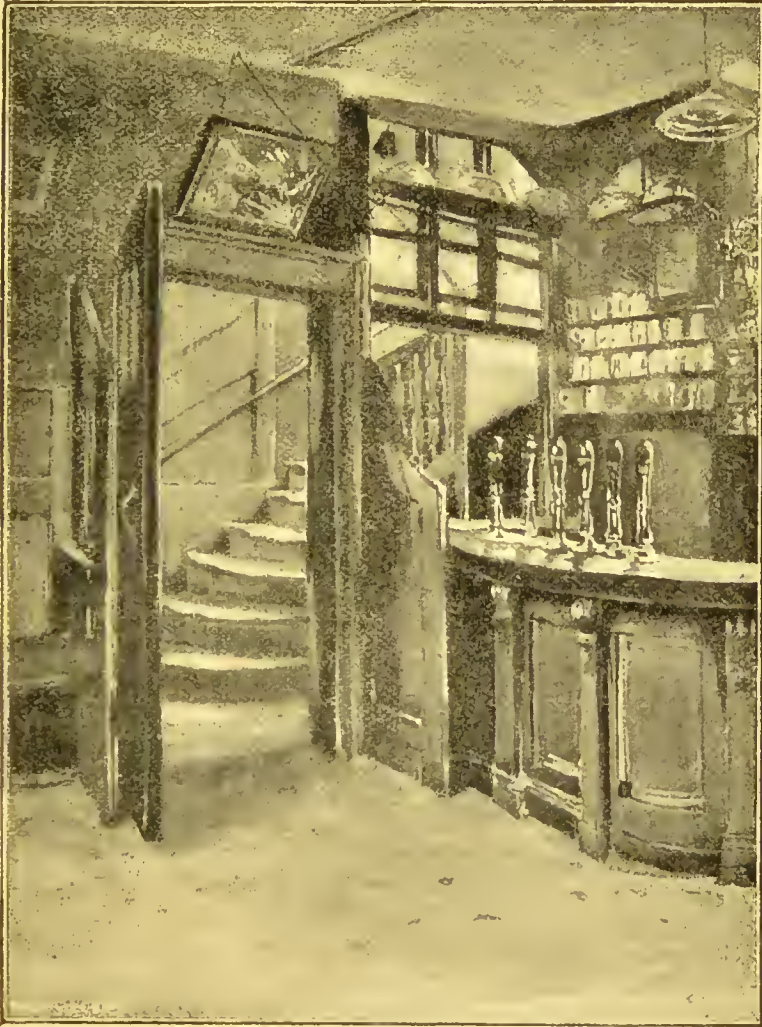
FIRST VIEW OF THE BAR

the libation to the local goddess who dispenses eternal youth. Like Dr. Johnson in his later years, I, in these later days, am abstinent from alcoholic beverages ; and, more fortunate than he, am not obliged to destroy my nerves with unlimited tidal waves of tea. Why ? Because to-day we drink Johannis. And that is my drink. Some people have been known to mix it with Cheshire Cheese whisky. But modestly, discreetly, and solemnly was I called to the Bar. Such is the fascination of the place that the call has resounded through my being ever since. I have responded to it for years, and respond to it now. Come, therefore, with me into the Bar. On the preceding page is depicted the scene which, as you enter, meets your yearning eyes.

"The bar of the 'Cheese' is unique amongst the bowers of Boniface in the metropolis. It has no equal and no rival. Here," says the *Sportsman* of March 30, 1887, "gather poets, painters, lawyers, barristers, preachers, journalists, stockbrokers, musicians, town councillors, and vestrymen, with just a *souppçon* of sporting celebrities, and a decided dash of the impecunious 'Have beens.' The latter represent in the 'Cheese' colony the Irish division in Parliament. Many of our most eminent journalists, legal luminaries, and successful merchants have been patrons of the Old Cheshire Cheese in the days when it was to them club, discussion forum, and even home."

The "Cheese" bar is like unto no other in this wide wilderness of London. The customers are unique, and the names of their drinks are peculiar. The simplest and amplest is "whisky," and that means Scotch whisky. No old customer of the "Cheese" would ever

think of asking for "Scotch." If anyone dares to say "Scotch," he is marked down at once as one not yet



BAR—WAY OUT

inured to the ways of the bar. On the other hand, neither must he whisper "Irish"—certainly not! If he knows his "Cheese" he asks for "Cork," and if he say "Irish," he is an ignoramus. Then who would mention "gin"? The word is absolutely vulgar, and should be confined to the East End and Mrs. Harris. No, no! the cognoscente calls for "rack"—a funny name which may symbolise the position of the drinker on the morrow, or it may be a mere contraction of arrack. Who shall say, or who cares?

Punch, a mysterious and delectable compound, we had better not order in the bar, its consumption is so much more pleasant up aloft; but there is no reason why we should not admire the punch bowls, and having gloated over them, and studied the portrait of an erewhile waiter over the fireplace as much as they deserve, we probably turn about, and, as the eyes become accustomed to the darkness, find ourselves confronted with this other view (p. 45). This shows you the way out. But don't go for a while. You would probably like to see somebody in the bar. So far as this book is concerned, there is no living thing to be seen in the vicinity except a cat, and that wise animal, as the illustration on p. 10 proves, prefers to remain in the passage.

What explanation can be given for depicting as a dreary solitude one of the places which every day contains more human beings to the square yard than any other space on the habitable globe? Do you think the explanation difficult? Not at all. The artist called daily for a week, seeking a chance to unfold his portfolio. Room was found for him, but, alas! the crowd made it impossible for him to open the sketch-book. Thus the Bar had to arrange to

give him a special sitting in the middle of the night, when nobody but the cat was on the watch. This explanation, it will be admitted, is as clear as the bar.

Adequately to people the Bar would task the pencil of a Hogarth. That more genial Hogarth of our time, Phil May, has done it passing well in his inimitable "*Parson and the Painter*," but, unfortunately, his sketches are not available for the purposes of this book. Allow me, in default, to refer to one or two celebrities. First of all, the most celebrated celebrity is the manageress, Miss Saddington. Somewhat austere to the outward view, she is of the most kindly heart, and much beloved of the Cheesemites for her amiable sarcasm. She has governed the Cheesemites, so far as my memory serves, for—dare I say it?—well, ten years, and with every sun her heart only seems to have become warmer, her sympathies enlarged, and, if that were possible, her wit more piercing. During her reign we have been permitted to bask in the radiance of many brilliant attendant maidens, notably, a brilliant sequence of three Miss Babbages. But they have departed, leaving only memories behind. The "*Cheese*" is a stepping-stone to greatness, for some of the ladies who have withdrawn themselves from our gaze have married, and, strange to relate, have not regretted it over much; some have become owners of hotels, and others, through their husbands, direct the destinies of this great empire, and it may be of the solar system. But Miss Saddington, let it be said, with gratitude, remains to give tone to the establishment.

I brought you here, gentle reader, in the morning when the evening paper editors and sub-editors flock

in after having finished their morning editions (in the topsy-turvydom of London, the evening papers begin publishing two hours before noon), but as further work is before them, their matutinal visits are short, and their orders urgent.

If it be winter time, the old-fashioned mullers of stout, copper, and cone-shaped, like a Welsh-woman's hat, are called into requisition to make hot ale or mulled claret, two delicious beverages prepared by the manageress with sugar and the spices of Araby the Blest in a way that it were vain to seek elsewhere. A longing glance at the punch bowls—it is too early to fill or empty them—a slap at a political foe, and the morning-evening journalists depart.

When the shades of even begin to fall, the blinds are drawn, the gas is lighted, and the full orchestra tunes up. The Cheesemites are in their glory, and what might be copy for a dozen comic papers elicits a little passing laughter and vanishes into oblivion. When the sparkle has fled from the champagne, who can restore it? A fresh bottle must be drawn, and to enjoy it during effervescence one must be present at the uncorking. Let me try, however, in a dull way to give some typical conversation.

The bar is crowded, and floating in the ambient air one detects the rich voice of a Scotch poet who is being taken to task for his grammar.

"It's maybe not English at present, Mr. Bluggs; but wha maks your English? It's your Shakespeares, your Multons, an' *Me!*"

From another part of the room comes the tones of an Englishman sadly hurtled by various Irish and Scotch discourses.

"Of course the Scotch say they speak better

English than the English. I remember I once had a short engagement on an Edinburgh paper. When about to leave 'Auld Reekie' there was a little *deoch-an-dorus*, and some fifteen of the fellows came to wish me God-speed. They were from some fifteen different parts of Scotland, and after certain formalities in the way of hot toddy my Scotch friends brought up the eternal question of their immaculate English. 'It may be as you say,' I interposed, 'but why do you speak it with fifteen different accents?' Had them there, ha! ha!"

Irish Dramatist (discussing tours, &c.)—"Did I hear you say Stoney Stratford? I was once there, and no wonder they called it Stoney Stratford, for I was never so bitten with bugs in my life."¹

Genial Advertising Manager—"I hear that poor old Mac's dead" (general sorrow and display of handkerchiefs). (Enter poor old Mac—silence falls on the company.)

Poor old Mac—"Good evening, Miss S——, I haven't seen you for a long time."

Miss S.—"Was it very hot where you have come from?"

Funny Man—"Why, Jack, you seem to believe in a lot of things nobody else believes in – (then, as a clincher)—I suppose you believe in the transmigration of souls!"

Solemn Man—"I do—and so do you. You must feel you were an ass when you lent me that half sovereign six months ago."

¹ This delightful *non sequitur* has already appeared in print. I give it as it actually sprang from the mouth of my Hibernian friend, who failed to understand the roar that followed.

Socialistic Journalist (to admiring friends)—
 “Have you read my articles in the *X Y Gazette*?
 No? Well, read them, and you will see that I am the
 second, if not the first, among the teachers of
 humanity. Nobody, for at least eighteen hundred
 years, has taught as I have taught.”

Waiter, suddenly entering the bar—“Oh, I beg
 your pardon, but you did not pay for that steak you
 had in the room.”

Socialistic Journalist—“Pay for it! Not likely!
 It was from the beginning as much my steak as
 Charlie Moore’s. Now it is more mine than his.
 Pay? Base is the slave that pays.”

Racing Journalist—“Jones is a good writer, but
 he will never set the Thames on fire.”

Impecunious Reporter—“I wish he would, for it’s
 very cold, and I have to sleep on the Embank-
 ment.”

The story goes that on one occasion there was
 some little misunderstanding at the bar, but mis-
 understandings are of the rarest, and this one has
 become legendary. The account which reached me
 ran something after this manner:—

Great Sub-Editor (with back to fire)—“*You’re*
 not a freemason.”

Great Reporter—“I am.”

G. S.-E.—“Why, I’ve been making masonic signs
 to you for the last half hour.”

G. R.—“Do you call me a ——?”

G. S.-E.—“I do.”

G. R.—“Then” —— (and they roll together on
 the floor).

Proprietor (rushing in)—“What’s this? What’s
 this about?”

Miss S.—“Only two gentlemen making a few masonic signs under the table.”

Of course, as a rule, harmony prevails in the “Cheese,” and “chaff” abounds without physical threshing, for the habitués love the “Cheese” and themselves too much to make the place a bear-garden. Dr. Johnson has left us the tradition of merciless blows, but they were blows in wordy strife in the argument for victory when, as Boswell says, the Doctor, if his pistol missed fire, knocked his opponent down with the butt-end. There are still plenty of butt-end blows given, but the rule is to find a pleasant flow of soul. The “Cheese” is a second home for the Cheese-mite, and one does not desecrate his own hearth.

To quote again from the *Sportsman* :—

“There is a sense of comfort and veneration about the place which constitutes an absolute charm. There is something homely and out of the common in its sawdust-coated floors, with uneven boards and great gaping ‘chinks’—those convenient receptacles for rolling coins, the perquisites of the cellarman and future generations of builders’ labourers. The fire-places are huge and commodious, capable of holding a hundredweight of coal at a time. These said fire-places, by the way, have much to answer for in legions of broken resolutions to be home at six. On a cold winter’s day, when their genial warmth penetrates every portion of the room, and the merry flames dance and leap after each other up the capacious chimney space, a man listens to the howling wind without, or hears the rain pattering on the paved courts, and he says, says he, ‘The old woman may be cross, or the mater may scold; but we don’t kill a sheep every day, and—just one more, James,

and I will catch the seven.' Those wicked fire-places, the huge singing-kettle, the cosy recesses, and the seductive perfume of toddy have indeed much to answer for. Like Tam o' Shanter, the patrons of the inn think not of the long miles and the party who is

Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm."

Perforce we must tear ourselves away, for other matter merits our concern.





CHAPTER VII

CLUB LIFE AT THE "CHEESE"

The feast of reason and the flow of soul.—POPE.

ONE of the most interesting features of the "Cheese" is its warm and full blooded club life. It is not the stately and withal solemn life of the modern West-end club, but it is the social and intensely human life of the club as Johnson, Burke, Reynolds understood it. When the Doctor, Sir Joshua, and some others established "The Club" in 1764, the members were to meet once a month and take supper, display their wit, and pass their evening in the sympathetic flow of soul.

At the "Old Cheshire Cheese" the Johnsonian tradition is naturally strong; it pervades the whole place, and all the clubs which hold their regular or occasional meetings there endeavour, as much as our less heroic days will allow, to emulate the example of the giants of the days gone by.

Here the spirit of last century lurks not in dim and solitary nooks, but stalks abroad even at noon-day before the face of all men. Yet it is when the

shades of night have fallen on Fleet Street that the invocation of the past is most successful, and the full flavour and fragrance of the old time spirit is enhanced at the call of a more modern though still mature and mellow brother. Then, when the big fire blazes in the mighty grate and the happy kettle croons to itself on the hob, when the blinds are down and the gas or the candles alight—for we still affect candles at the “Cheese”—then is the witching hour when fellow opens his heart to fellow, and the room resounds with merry quips and cranks, happy turns of thought and pleasant mirth.

Informal clubs, amorphous ever-changing coteries of everyday acquaintances are to be seen nightly at the “Cheese”; but the other sort, organised, developed, and vertebrate only appear in their proper season.

The first of these is, of course :

THE JOHNSON CLUB.

A club composed of many men eminent in literature and art, or distinguished in other ways. The club is restricted to thirty-one members, who bind themselves to sup together annually on or about December 13, the anniversary of the Doctor's death, but various other meetings are held throughout the year. The nature of the club may be best described here in the words of Dr. George Birkbeck Hill, the well-known editor of the latest and best edition of “Boswell.” “We are,” he says (in the *Atlantic Monthly* of January 1896), “in strict accordance with the great lexicographer's definition, ‘an assembly of good fellows meeting under certain conditions’; the conditions being that we shall do honour to the

immortal memory of Dr. Samuel Johnson by supping together four times a year, and by swallowing as much beef steak pudding, punch, and tobacco smoke as the strength of each man's constitution admits. A few of the weaker brethren—among whom unhappily I am included—whose bodily infirmity cannot respond to the cheerful Johnsonian cry, 'Who's for poonsh?' do their best to play their part by occasionally reading essays on Johnsonian subjects, and by seasoning their talk with anecdotes and sayings of the great Doctor. We are tolerated by the jovial crew, for they see that we mean well, and are as 'clubbable' as nature allows. OUR FAVOURITE HAUNT IS THE OLD CHESHIRE CHEESE, THE ONLY TAVERN IN FLEET STREET LEFT UNCHANGED by what Johnson called that 'fury of innovation' which, beginning with Tyburn and its gallows-tree, has gradually transformed London. The Mitre, 'where he loved to sit up late'; where he made Boswell's head ache, not with the port wine, but with the sense he put into it; where, at their first supper, he called to him with warmth, 'Give me your hand, I have taken a liking to you'; where, nearly a century later, Hawthorne, in memory of the two men, dined 'in the low, sombre coffee-room——' The Mitre has been rebuilt.

"The Cock, most ancient of taverns, has followed its 'plump head waiter' along the road of mortality, although, fortunately, its fittings and furniture are still preserved with the house which, under the same name, has risen on the other side of the street. THE OLD CHESHIRE CHEESE STANDS AS IT STOOD IN THE DAYS WHEN GOLDSMITH USED TO PASS ITS SIDE DOOR on his way up the dark entry to his

lodgings in Wine Office Court. The jolly host who owns the freehold can show title deeds going back almost to the time of the great fire of London.

"There, on the ground floor, we meet our 'Prior' sitting on a bench, above which is set in the wall a brass tablet bearing the following inscription:—

"THE FAVOURITE SEAT OF
DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Born September 18, 1709; Died December 13, 1784.

"In him a noble understanding and a masterly intellect were united to great independence of character and unfailing goodness of heart, which won the admiration of his own age, and remain as recommendations to the reverence of posterity.

"No, sir! there is nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness has been produced as by a good tavern.—*Johnson.*'

"In this same room, with its floor as 'nicely sanded' as when Goldsmith knew it, our club gathers from time to time; here, undisturbed in our thoughts by a single modern innovation except the gas, we sup on one of those beef-steak puddings for which the Cheshire Cheese has been famous from time immemorial. So vast is it in all its glorious rotundity, that it has to be wheeled in on a table; it disdains a successor in the same line, and itself alone satisfies forty hungry guests. 'A magnificent hot apple-pie stuck with bay leaves,' our second course, recalls the supper with which Johnson 'celebrated the birth of the first literary child of Mrs. Lennox, the novelist, when at five in the morning his face still shone with meridian splendour, though his drink had been only lemonade.' The talk is of the liveliest; from time to time toasts are drunk and responded to."

The centenary of the death of Dr. Johnson was celebrated in December 1884, and the *Illustrated*



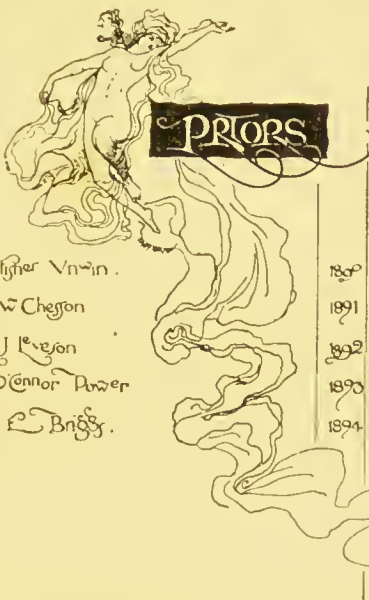
THE CHESHIRE CHEESE—FLEET STREET ENTRANCE

Sporting and Dramatic News of the 20th of that month thus refers to the Doctor's connection with the ancient

hostelry: "Whoever has heard of the grand old Doctor knows well that the greater part of his life was passed between Ludgate Hill and Temple Bar, and that the most interesting portion of it revolved about Gough Square. There seems to be little doubt that while he lived here, the Old Cheshire Cheese tavern was, as is claimed for it, the haunt which he most favoured, and where much of that sledge-hammer wisdom was coaxed forth or teased forth which Boswell has recorded, that, as Macaulay put it, the memory of Johnson might keep alive the fame of his works."

As supplementary to Dr. Birkbeck Hill's description of the club, the following account of an anniversary dinner is extracted from the *City Press* of December 17, 1887:—

"On Tuesday night the members of the Johnson Club, which was founded on December 13, 1884, in honour of the memory of Dr. Samuel Johnson, had their annual dinner in that noted city hostelry, the Old Cheshire Cheese, Wine Office Court. The occasion was the anniversary of the Doctor's death, which the club think they cannot commemorate better than by dining well and heartily, as probably stern old Samuel would have wished. They also pay a compliment to the conservative instincts of the Doctor, by abjuring the flaring innovation of gas illumination, and eat their dinners solemnly by the light of wax candles. The gloom made apparent by the antiquated lights scarcely served to show the portrait of Dr. Johnson, which was posed on the mantel-shelf, and the frame of which bore the somewhat strange device, 'The glory of a nation are its authors.' The Prior of the club, Mr. O'Connor Power, M.P., occupied the chair, and among those present, hosts and guests,



1885	T. Light Vinton.	1890	J. Menwood Thoms
1886	F. W. Chegon	1891	F. C. Gault
1887	R. J. Leeson	1892	George White
1888	J. O'Connor Power	1893	G. H. Ryland
1889	W. E. Briggs.	1894	Augustine Brett, L.C.M.P.

Decennial Anniversary Supper

Thursday December 15th 1894

at the "Old Cheshire Cheese" Wine Office Court.

At 7 o'clock in the evening

Roast Beef, Potatoes, with Figs, Kidney, Onions, and Mushrooms
 Haricots, and Mint Sauce.
 Golden Beer and red French Wine
 Apple Pie with Cream. Stewed Cheese

And the Anniversary Toast, and God send the Club

were Sir James Linton, President of the Royal Institute of Water Colour Painters ; Dr. Hunter, M.P. ; Sir John Thurston, Governor of Fiji ; M. Gennadius, Minister for Greece ; Mr. Seymour Lucas, A.R.A. ; Mr. J. E. Christie, artist ; Mr. Havard Thomas, artist ; Mr. W. E. Briggs, late M.P. for Blackburn ; Mr. Birkbeck Hill, the latest editor of Boswell's immortal biography, and a numerous gathering of the literary and artistic workers of which the club is mainly composed. The Prior proposed 'The Memory of Dr. Johnson,' and made the customary speech on assuming his new office. The name of Mr. H. M. Stanley, the explorer, as a member of the club, was associated with the toast of 'Absent Friends,' and wishes were expressed for the success of his latest heroic expedition."

On page 59 we have just seen a reduced presentment of two pages of the bill of fare of the dinner held on the hundred and tenth anniversary of the Doctor's death (1894). A very beautiful drawing of the stair and bar window formed the frontispiece of the tasteful menu. Another drawing of the stair by the same artist, p. 10, shows the stair in a different aspect.

The chair was occupied by Mr. Augustine Birrell, Q.C., M.P., wittiest of lawyers and law-makers, whose "Obiter Dicta" are in a fair way to be as renowned for their polish and rapier keenness as Johnson's were for bludgeon bluntness. But the *Sketch*, December 19, 1894, which devotes a page and a half to illustration, description, and report, says that "the most interesting figure of the evening was undoubtedly Mr. Dobson. His health was proposed just in such a way as it must have been in the days when men of letters indited odes to one another." Then followed the reading of gentle imitations of Mr. Dobson's style, but exigency

of space precludes our quoting more than a couple of stanzas from a delightful perversion of "The Ladies of St. James's":

The Journalists of Fleet Street
Have precious little cash,
They put their all in papers
Which swiftly go to smash ;
But Publishers, my Publishers
Sit twirling of their thumbs
While sweated clerks with ledgers
Tot up colossal sums.

The Journalists of Fleet Street
While taking of their ease,
Invoke the frequent tankard
That haunts the Cheshire Cheese ;
But Publishers, my Publishers,
As epicures enjoy
The wines of Mr. Nicols,
And soups of the Savoy.

The anniversary supper of the following year
(1895)

*Atte ye Anciente Hostelrye vcepte ÷ Ye ÷ Old ÷
Cheshyre ÷ Cheese*

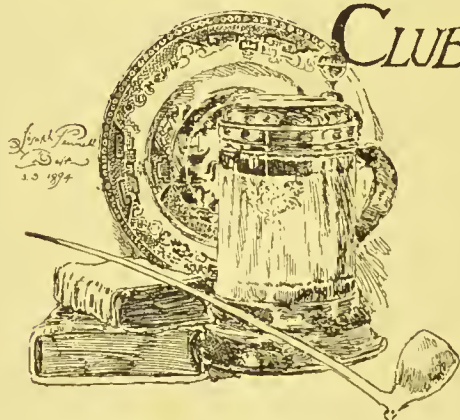
did not produce quite so elaborate a Bill of the Fare, yet it had one feature well worthy of reproduction here, and with Mr. Joseph Pennell's kind permission we present it to our readers, who will recognise how deftly that charming artist has idealised the old blue willow plate, the pipe, and the pot.

The *Sketch* of December 18, 1895, gives the following report of that year's meeting :—

"The members of the Johnson Club held their winter meeting on December 13, at the Cheshire Cheese. There was a large gathering of members

and guests, including Augustine Birrell, who has just vacated the chair ; John Sargeant, the new Prior ; H. M. Stanley, the Explorer, now M.P. for North Lambeth ; E. G. Leveson, the Scribe ; L. F. Austin, the sub-Prior ; W. A. McArthur, Henwood Thomas, George Whale, Henry Norman, H. W. Massingham, Lionel Johnson, T. Fisher Unwin, Joseph Pennell, A. Spokes, T. Ashton, A. Spalding, G. Hance, G. Green, and Gilbert Burgess. The chief incident of the evening was the

THE JOHNSON CLUB



reappearance of Mr. Henwood Thomas, an original member of the club, after an absence of six years, during which he has suffered a painful illness. In response to the toast of his health, proposed by the sub-Prior, Mr. Thomas made a speech afterwards described by Mr. Birrell as the most admirably Johnsonian utterance he had ever heard. In lieu of the usual paper, Mr. Birrell gave a diverting account of the visit of a handful of the brethren to Ashbourne,

where they discovered a descendant of Boswell. The Prior proposed the health of the guests, and responses in various keys of awe and deprecation were made by Mr. Ashton and others. Mr. Edward Clodd and Mr. H. B. Wheatley, the editor of 'Pepys,' were elected new members."

For the benefit of readers beyond the seas who may not be quite familiar with our prominent men, it may be remarked that the list of those present as given above includes eminent artists, editors, and special correspondents of great newspapers, and at least one great African explorer, not to speak of the latest editors of the two most wonderful books in the language, "Pepys" and "Boswell."

THE RHYMERS' CLUB.

Another club which affects the stern, uncushioned comforts of the "Cheese" is known as the Rhymers' Club, and we betray no secret when we give the names of the members, for are they not written in the book of their poetic deeds? In this book, published through Elkin Mathews in 1892, the composition of the club is thus recorded: Ernest Dowson, Edwin J. Ellis, G. A. Greene, Lionel Johnson, Richard Le Gallienne, Victor Plarr, Ernest Radford, Ernest Rhys, T. W. Rolleston, Arthur Symons, John Todhunter, W. B. Yeats.

When such sweet singers meet, it may well be believed that the night is ambrosial, care and the world is banished, and the contests of the "Cheese" and of "The Mermaid"—in miniature, it is no discourtesy to say—live again, as Mr. Rhys sings:—

As once Rare Ben and Herrick
Set older Fleet Street mad,
With wit not esoteric,
And laughter that was lyric,
And roystering rhymes and glad.

As they, we drink defiance
To-night to all but Rhyme,
And most of all to Science
And all such skins of lions
That hide the ass of time.

A very considerable poet and proseman, Mr. John Davidson, a Scotchman, by the way, from the vicinity of Paisley, in his recent work, "A Full and True Account of the Wonderful Mission of Earl Lavender, which Lasted One Night and One Day, with a History of the Pursuit of Earl Lavender and Lord Brumm, by Mrs. Scamler and Maud Emblem," brings two of his characters, Mr. Gurdon and Sir Harry Emblem, into the "Cheese" in a condition which would spell ruin to the landlord were it generally adopted, or at least became common when the Rhymers' Club is not in session. The two gentlemen had spent some £40 in eight days, and now they are "on the rocks" in a Strand restaurant. But foreigners have hard hearts, and so the delightful couple find their way to the Cap and Bells, which every Fleet Streeter will recognise as the Cheshire Cheese. They order supper, and though unprepared to pay, are prepared to justify their deeds. They were quite unconventional in the matter of settlement of accounts; they were financially naked, yet they were not ashamed. Fortunately for the landlord, it happens that on this night the Guild of Proscmen (oh, sarcastic Mr. Davidson!), otherwise the Rhymers' Club, are holding their meeting, and one of the members, acting more like an impulsive poet than

a mere proseman, settles their account and introduces them to the club. There we must say farewell to Mr. Davidson's creations, but we cannot leave the Rhymers without quoting, by the kindness of the author and the publisher, the following exquisite

BALLADE OF THE CHESHIRE CHEESE
IN FLEET STREET.

I know a home of antique ease
Within the smoky city's pale,
A spot wherein the spirit sees
Old London through a thinner veil.
The modern world so stiff and stale,
You leave behind you when you please,
For long clay pipes and great old ale
And beefsteaks in the "Cheshire Cheese."

Beneath this board Burke's, Goldsmith's knees
Were often thrust—so runs the tale—
'Twas here the Doctor took his ease,
And wielded speech that like a flail
Threshed out the golden truth. All hail,
Great Souls ! that met on nights like these,
Till morning made the candles pale,
And revellers left the "Cheshire Cheese."

By kindly sense and old decrees
Of England's use they set their sail,
We press to never furrowed seas,
For vision-worlds we breast the gale,
And still we seek and still we fail,
For still the "glorious phantom" flees.
Ah well ! no phantom are the ale
And beefsteaks of the "Cheshire Cheese."

ENVOI.

If doubts or debts thy soul assail,
If Fashion's forms its current freeze,
Try a long pipe, a glass of ale,
And supper at the "Cheshire Cheese."

"THE 49 CLUB"

is a more recent club which meets at the "Cheese" to partake, as their "Chronicle" has it, of "a curious mysterie

Yclept ye 49 pudding,
Also Grylled Bones,
Also Stewed Cheese,

together with such Olde Ales, Coftlie Wines, and strong waters as may fuit ye taste, purfe, or conscience of ye Members."

The Chronicle of this Club is very diverting, and begins with a motto *not* from Goethe,

*Ein guter Trunk
Macht Alte junk.*

which is, after all, a very partial and temporary truth. For the guidance of other social clubs I cannot refrain from quoting *in extenso* the article headed "Rules."

"The Rules of the Club being of the sort once heard are never forgotten, there is no need to repeat them in this Chronicle."

So much for the Forty-niners.

THE SOAKERS' CLUB.

"We'll have flesh for holidays, fish for fasting days, and moreo'er puddings and flapjacks; and thou shalt be welcome," was the Shakesperian motto of this frankly christened club. The pious founder of the club tells us in a finely printed booklet that "it was deemed a requisite that your club should flourish under some rollicking epithet such as had not previously been 'empounded' by any other fraternity. The title should be terse; it should also be outrageous.

It should smack of the *caveau*, and have the scent of the beeswing. Accordingly, many have been the creations that have in turn possessed the mind of your promoters. Fuddling clubs, gorging clubs, out-Heroding Herod clubs—these comprised a whole hand of clubs, in which was not a single trump. Then did your promoters bethink themselves of that unctuous cognomen, 'The Soakers.' The title is a nudity. . . . The name of 'The Soakers' Club' is selected only as conveying a sharp antithetical travestie upon our sober habits as moderate men." This last statement is consolatory, for it would have been unpleasant if the club had come to the "Cheese" merely to make manifest their loyalty to their name. They were good fellows, and though not quite antithetical to their designation, did not allow it to run riot with their moderate tendencies. They dined at the "Cheese" regularly for years, but their numbers did not increase, owing probably to the frank brutality of their title, and the natural result was that they gradually dwindled away. Moral: There is something in a name after all.

THE ST. DUNSTAN'S CLUB.

Sir Walter Scott openly admitted his preference for a title that told the reader nothing. He gives a fine description of Mary Queen of Scots in one of his novels, but the temptation which would have been too much for a writer of the G. P. R. James order was avoided by the Wizard of the North. He did not call the novel by the name of the hapless queen; too much of Mary would have been expected from him if he had, and the balance of the story would have been lost. Therefore we learn about Lochleven and

Langside under the negative appellation of "The Abbot." So with "The Saint Dunstan's Club," the title is most respectable, and it says very little as to what the St. Dunstan's Club is. No wife, however shrewd, could object to her marital slave being a member of the St. Dunstan's, while even the most angelic of ladies would scarcely like to see her lord flourishing as a leader among "The Soakers." Therefore has the St. Dunstan's flourished like a green bay tree for over a century. Its proud boast is that it has contributed more Common Councilmen and Aldermen (and consequently Lord Mayors) to the Corporation of the City of London than any other club in the Metropolis.

The St. Dunstan's is pre-eminently a social club, neither party nor religion entering into its management. As may be expected, its members (now limited to twenty-eight) are leading men in their respective walks of life. The St. Dunstan's Club is called after the courageous English saint who, according to tradition, once pulled Satan by the nose with a pair of pincers. This episode in the life of the holy friar is represented on the insignia of the club. The club legend is that St. Dunstan shook the devil all round the boundaries of the parish, and then dropped him in the Temple, hence the origin of the name of the "Devil's Own" applied to the legal profession, hence also the name of "The Devil" tavern, nearly opposite St. Dunstan's Church, where the Apollo Club was presided over by Ben Jonson. Fleet Streeters can no longer "go to the Devil," in the sense of going to any particular tavern, but anyone of respectability may be introduced to Child's Bank, No. 1 Fleet Street, which stands on the Devil's site. The bankers pre-

serve in their parlour Jonson's Latin rules set down for the guidance of the club.

To recur to the St. Dunstan's Club, it appears by the Minute Book that it was first established at Anderton's Coffee House on March 10, 1790, by the Rev. Joseph Williamson, the then Vicar of St. Dunstan's, Mr. Nicholls, of St. Bride's, Deputy of the South Side of the Ward of Farringdon Without, and some fifteen others, inhabitants of Fleet Street and its immediate vicinity. The club was limited to thirty members, whereof twenty-six were to be inhabitants of the parish, and four gentlemen resident in the ward. A chairman, treasurer, and secretary were annually elected at the first meeting of the club in the month of October, and the toasts were fixed by resolution to be as follows :—

1st.—The King.

2nd.—The Queen, the Prince of Wales, and the rest of the Royal Family.

3rd.—Unanimity to this Parish.

4th.—Prosperity to the Ward.

5th.—The Absent Members.

At the first regular meeting of the club Mr. Brewer, of St. Sepulchre's, who was the Deputy for the North Side of the Ward, was duly elected a member, and at a meeting held on October 17, 1792, the celebrated John Wilkes, Alderman of the Ward, was unanimously elected an honorary member. The subscription to the club was one guinea per annum, and the principal source of income appears to have been derived from wagers for bottles of wine amongst the members, the annual elections for Common Councilmen in the Ward always producing a good number of bets as to the position of the various

members of the club at the declaration of the poll. Wagers were laid about every conceivable thing under the sun, as a few of the following examples will show:—

January 25, 1792.—“Mr. Whipham laid Mr. P. North a gallon of claret that 14 days from this date the 3 per Cent. Consols would be 95 per cent.” Mr. Whipham lost.

The members do not seem to have gone home at 11 o'clock, as they should have done according to the rules of the club, as the following bet shows:—

January 16, 1793.—“Mr. P. North lays Mr. Hounsom a bottle of wine that he (Mr. P. North) will be in bed before 2 o'clock the next morning (January 17), and Mr. Hounsom lays Mr. P. North that he has lost the above wager.”

The following quaint bet shows that the price of a Welsh rarebit in those days was “twopence.”

June 12, 1793.—“Mr. P. North lays that Mr. Hounsom will not forget to pay Mr. Thorne the 2*d.* to-morrow in the course of the day which he (Mr. Thorne) had lent and advanced for him to pay the waiter 2*d.* for a Welsh rarebit which Mr. Hounsom had for his supper.”

Ten other members also wagered whether he would or would not pay the 2*d.*, the result of these bets we find duly chronicled as follows:—

January 19, 1793.—“Mr. Thorne reported that Mr. Hounsom had paid him the 2*d.* at half-past 9 o'clock in the morning.”

The following wagers are somewhat suggestive:—

June 12, 1793.—“Mr. Lambe and Mr. Dep. Nicholls ‘1 bottle.’ Mr. Lambe lays that Mr. Dep. Nicholls knows Miss W——. *Upon explanation Mr.*

Dep. Nicholls lost. Mr. Jones and Mr. J. North '1 bottle.' Mr. Jones lays that neither Mr. Lambe nor Mr. Dep. Nicholls knows Miss W——. Mr. Jones lost. Mr. Dep. Nicholls requested that the club would permit him to pay a bottle for having termed Miss W—— Mr. Hounsom's *friend* instead of *neighbour*. Ordered that it be granted. Mr. Lambe and Mr. J. North 'a bottle.' Mr. Lambe lays that he (Mr. Lambe) never ran away from a good thing. After some discussion it was decided that Mr. Lambe had lost the bet."

In 1795 a great number of bets were made about the wearing of hair powder, and the wagering was so keen that counsel's opinion was taken as to who had won the respective bets; the original opinion and decision of the counsel (Mr. George Bond, of Serjeants' Inn) is attached to the Minute Book.

It has also been the custom of the club to wager on the "*First Letter*" of the King's or Queen's Speech after the words "*My Lords and Gentlemen.*" This naturally affords great scope for speculation, which, it appears by the minutes, the members have taken full advantage of. When the funds of the club were low the following among other expedients was adopted:—

February 22, 1792.—"Resolved that any member of this club elected to any office of honour or emolument shall pay for the benefit of the club one bottle of port wine."

With one more extract from the minutes I will conclude this short eventful history of the club.

April 8, 1795.—"Mr. Hounsom and Mr. Whipham '1 bottle.' Mr. Hounsom lays that the Prince of Wales will not have issue within the space of 12

months. Mr. Fisher and Mr. Williams '1 bottle.' Mr. Fisher lays that the Prince of Wales will have issue within the space of 12 months. Mr. Thorne and Mr. George '1 bottle.' Mr. Thorne lays that the Princess of Wales will be delivered of a son or daughter within 12 calendar months."

April 22, 1795.—"Rev. Mr. Williamson and Mr. Ustonson '1 bottle.' Mr. Williamson lays that the Princess of Wales is not delivered of a son or daughter within 12 calendar months. Mr. Butterworth and Mr. Piggott '1 bottle.' Mr. Butterworth lays that the Prince of Wales will not have issue within 12 months."¹

THE LEGITIMIST CLUB.

Before leaving the interesting subject of "Cheese" Clubs it would be unfair not to mention one more of the many which enjoys on occasion the hospitality of the "Cheese." Most people in this land, and presumably everybody in America, would consider the club somewhat belated. It has an idea that Queen Victoria is a usurper, and that the rightful sovereign of these isles and of the empire is some foreign potentate whom even his own states disown. The following paragraph from the *Daily Telegraph* of March 25, 1895, will show, however their views on high politics may be considered, the excellence of their taste in gastronomy cannot be called in question:—

"A few gentlemen are still left in this hasteful, bustling, and forgetful age who have time to remember

¹ 1895-6. Only a hundred years! The present treasurer of the Club is the gentleman who is responsible for the mechanical outbringing of this great book.

that James I. ascended the throne of England on March 24, 1603. It is hardly necessary to add that they are members of the Thames Valley Legitimist Club, who spend their leisure in moaning over the extinguished glories of their country since the expulsion of James II. Taking advantage of the fact that yesterday was not only the anniversary of the date just given, but was also Mothering Sunday, when the rigidity of the Lenten fast is temporarily suspended, they dined together last evening in the Old Cheshire Cheese, and after doing justice to the famous Johnsonian puddings and other viands, amused themselves after their wont by inspecting a piece of the scaffold on which some unfortunate followers of the House of Stuart were executed. The health of the Queen was drunk, and it was incidentally mentioned as a fact not generally known that, with two exceptions, every sovereign in Europe was descended from the saintly mother of the monarch whose anniversary they were that day celebrating. The health of Charles VII. of Spain, whoever he may be, was duly honoured."





CHAPTER VIII

DR. JOHNSON'S HOMES AND HAUNTS

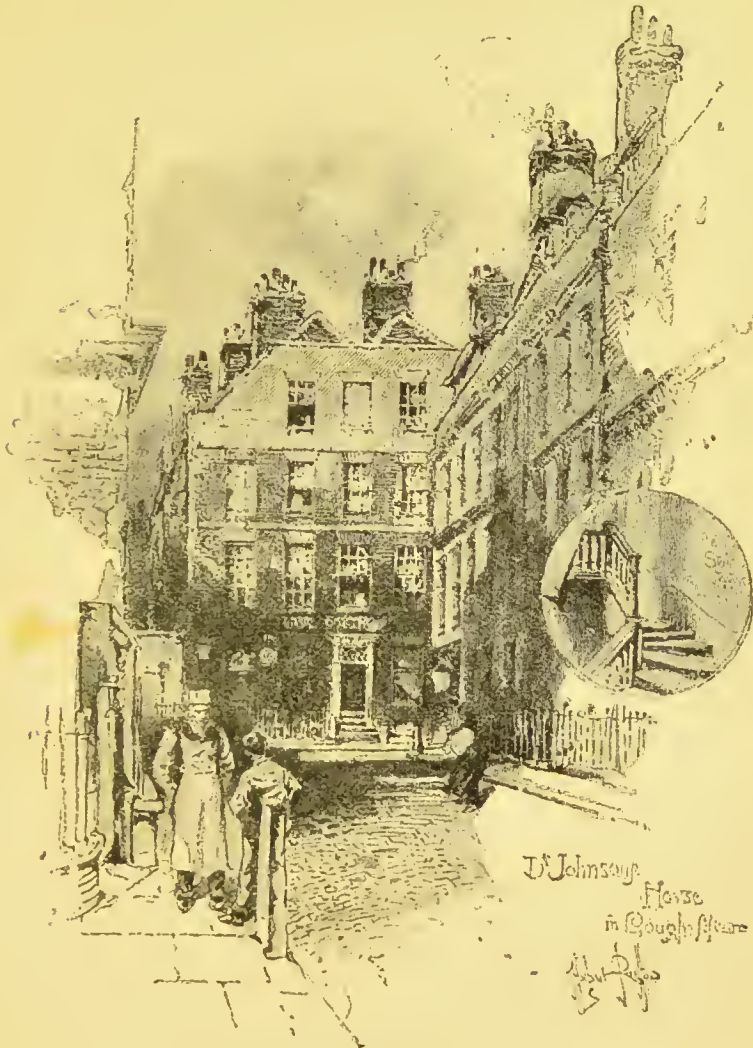
Whoe'er has travelled life's dull round
Where'er his stages may have been,
May sigh to think he still has found
The warmest welcome at an inn.—SHENSTONE.

IT is a common belief that Fleet Street is dotted with houses which were Dr. Johnson's homes in later years, and with the taverns in which he sat drinking tea and talking philosophy till the small hours of the morning. It is not so. The Doctor's house at No. 1 Inner Temple Lane has given way to "Johnson's Buildings."

In Johnson's Court (probably a misspelling for Jonson's Court, after Rare Ben) the Doctor lived from 1765 to 1776, and during his "journey" in Scotland humorously described himself as "Johnson of that Ilk." The house (No. 7) has, however, gone the way of all bricks and mortar. In 1776 he removed to No. 8 Bolt Court, where he passed the rest of his life. The house was demolished soon after his death. In fact there is only one house—No. 17 Gough Square—on which we can look and say, "Here dwelt Dr. Johnson."

In an interesting article on "Dr. Johnson's Homes

and Haunts," the *St. James's Gazette* of October 10, 1887, says that the names of seventeen taverns

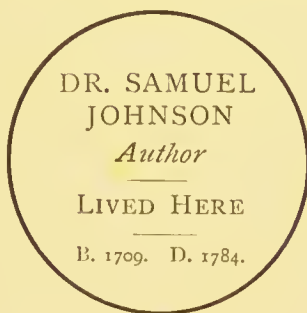


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"The Sketch")

which knew the lexicographer's presence will have come down to us, and of these but five are in existence at the present day. "In Fleet Street," continues the writer, "there is but one tavern—the Cheshire Cheese—to which the true believer should allow himself to be attracted. Goldsmith lived in the same court (No. 6, nearly opposite the main entrance to the 'Cheese'), and there can be no doubt that he and the Doctor spent many an evening in the same old rooms. These are all that survive of Johnson's favoured taverns. It is the custom to speak of the Mitre, now the Clachan, as the house which Boswell mentions so often. But this is certainly a mistake. The Mitre of Johnson's day was situated a few doors nearer Temple Bar. The landlord of the Clachan displays 'Johnson and Boswell's room,' but without any authority. . . 'Child's Bank' in Fleet Street stands where stood the Devil tavern—famous long before the lexicographer's time as the scene of many of Ben Jonson's frolics. They are all gone, these hallowed precincts with which 'Fleet Street is dotted' in the imagination of impulsive idolaters; all except the house in Gough Square and the tavern in Wine Office Court."

There is a not unnatural tone of sadness in the conclusion of the *St. James's* article; one seems to hear the plaint of Charles Lamb's "all gone, the old familiar faces." Gone or going are the old familiar places. A perfect fury of rebuilding has overtaken London, and ancient landmarks are being obliterated without ruth as without remorse. Since the *St. James's* article appeared, Gough Square itself has undergone the inevitable alteration—for the worse from an æsthetic point of view. It once was surrounded with well built, commodious, and dignified,

if not imposing dwellings. The rich colour of their fine red brick, mellowed and subdued by age, and rendered delightful to the eye, wearied amid the wilderness of meaner houses, by the flowers and green climbing plants that arose from the window sills, is now only a memory. Sallow, unwholesome-looking houses, built of the refuse of London's dust bins, accommodate printers and their machinery on three sides of the square. Fortunately for the devotee, at the western end (the square is paradoxically an oblong, and has ends) the Doctor's house still stands intact. Here his wife died in 1752, and here he completed his Dictionary in 1755. In his note book for 1831, Carlyle, that stern admirer of stout old Samuel, mentions having paid a visit to the house and interviewed the occupant, who was apparently under the impression that his illustrious predecessor in the tenancy had been a schoolmaster. So he had been, and one of his pupils, a pupil of whom any master might have been proud, was David Garrick. But the tenant knew not that schoolmastering had long been abandoned when the Doctor was compiling his Dictionary in that by no means majestic abode. On the right hand side of the doorway the Society of Arts have placed a plaque with the following inscription:—





CHAPTER IX

THE "CHEESE" AND ITS FARE—A GREAT FALL IN PUDDING

Resurgam.

THE *Sportsman* of March 30, 1887, has a long and eulogistic article on the "Cheese," but exigencies of space preclude my quoting it in its entirety. The writer says: "In the main arteries of traffic the ancient hostelries have disappeared before the resistless march of modern progress—I had almost written vandalism. The last to vanish was the famous Cock tavern in Fleet Street. Happily the most famous of London ancient taverns is left to us in the Old Cheshire Cheese, which is yet nightly haunted by the shade of Dr. Johnson, whose modern prototypes still enjoy their steaks and punch, and discuss politics, polemics, and plays, though they wear short hair and masher collars, instead of full-bottomed wigs and ruffles.

"The old 'C. C.' is a retiring, respectable, very conservative, and hoary-headed aristocrat of the

bygone school. Changes are made with a very rebellious spirit, and the introduction of a patent American machine for squeezing lemons savoured so much of modern progress, that its appearance nearly raised a riot amongst the patrons of the sawdust-strewed bar. The 'Cheese' has no glaring front, nor does it invite custom by acres of plate-glass, glittering gasaliers, or gorgeous frescoes. A modest representation of a cheese in dingy glass does duty for a sign so far as the street of Fleet is concerned. The house has its school of customers, who look upon it as a species of club, without the expense of entrance fee. How old the original edifice was I am not prepared to say, but I notice by an ancient sideboard that it was rebuilt in 1667.

"Inside, the hostelry has a curiously quaint, old-world appearance, and this has been jealously preserved to good purpose by successive proprietors. Rebuilt, decorated in the prevailing style of public house architecture, the Old C. C. would have nothing to recommend it over scores—nay, hundreds—of its fellows.

"The dining-room is fitted with rows of wooden benches and wooden tables without the slightest pretence of show. But the cloths are white and clean, and the cutlery bright, while the china service is of that ancient and undemonstrative blue design which delighted our forefathers, and is known as the willow pattern. The glasses are large, thick, and heavy, and might be used with effect in an argument. But—whisper it not in the ears of Bill Sikes, and tell it not to Fagan—the silver is silver, and not Brummagen, and has seen more service than would destroy

half the property of modern public-houses. On the walls hang three prominent objects, a barometer, a print of Dr. Johnson, and an old oil painting by Wageman, representing the interior of the room with a gentleman trying his steak with his knife ; a waiter holding up a port wine cork in the well-known attitude 'two with you' ; and a cat rubbing her oleaginous hide in anxious expectation against the leg of the settle. This picture, like one in the bar, is a heirloom, or rather a fixture, which cannot be sold—'for ever and ever, amen!'—but must pass from landlord to landlord.

"Upstairs there are extensive ranges of kitchens, where burnt sacrifices are being perpetually offered up in the shape of mutton and beef ; a dining-room and a smoke-room, dark-panelled and cosy, where a man may forget the world and be lost to it during a much-coveted mid-day rest. Of other rooms on other floors no man knoweth, save that in rumours it is alleged there have been private parties over marrow-bones and puddings, a theory which is well borne out by echoes of peals of laughter, and the popping of champagne corks. Whatever the place may be above, however, it has no comparison with the glories that lie below the paving. The privileged few who are allowed to go into the wondrous cellars—redolent of sawdust, cobweb-coated, and covered with dust—wander amidst avenues of wine-bins with wonder and astonishment at the space occupied underground as compared with the upper regions. The entrance to the cellars is in the dingy office in the street of Fleet, which is devoted to the wholesale department, and here a record is kept of the rich old ports and generous clarets sleeping below, with the

merry devils of laughter bottled up in quarts and magnums in overcoats of pink and foil. No man could remember them, be his experience as a cellar-man what it may.

"The old C. C. is a fine record of the passing seasons. When genial spring has brought forward vegetation, the waiter's cheerful intimation that 'Asparagus is on, sir,' recalls the fact forcibly to your notice. When later, 'Am and peas' can be secured, the vision of early summer is perfect, and is not even disturbed by boiled beans and bacon. In the hot, sultry days, cool salads are appropriate, and when these disappear there is a closing in of daylight and a general warning that the year is past its prime. Then does the 'Cheese' draw its blinds and light its gas, stoke up its fires, and announce its great puddings. Yet further ahead, when raw November days come upon us, the savoury smell of Irish stew—that fine winter lining for the hungry—pervades the place, and so the season goes round. Of all the changes brought about by the rolling year, however, none is so popular as the advent of

THE PUDDING,

though it means frost, and damp, and cold winds. *The* pudding (*italics for 'the,' please*) has no rival in size or quality. Its glories have been sung in every country, even the *Fort Worth (Texas) Gazette* having something to say on the subject. The pudding ranges from fifty to sixty, seventy, and eighty pounds weight, and gossip has it that in the dim past the rare dish was constructed to proportions of a hundred-weight. It is composed of a fine light crust in a huge basin, and there are entombed therein beef steaks,

kidneys, oysters, larks, mushrooms, and wondrous spices and gravies, the secret of which is known only to the compounder. The boiling process takes about

SIXTEEN TO TWENTY HOURS,

and the smell on a windy day has been known to reach as far as the Stock Exchange. The process of carving the pudding on Wednesdays and Saturdays, when it is served, is as solemn a ceremony as the cutting of the mistletoe with the golden sickle of the Druids. The late proprietor, Mr. Beaufoy A. Moore, could be with difficulty restrained from rising from his bed, when stricken down with illness, to drive to the 'Cheese' and serve out the pudding. No one, he believed, could do it with such judicious care and judgment as he did. But Mr. Charles, his successor, has just such a dainty hand, an equally good eye for perspective, and few men could more readily spot the liver wing of a lark in the midst of the savoury mass when the 'lid' is off. Once, and once only, was that pudding dropped. Alas, the sad day! In the room sat an expectant, hungry army of fifty men. The waiter, bearing in triumph the pudding, appeared smiling on the scene. His foot slipped, he tripped, the pudding wavered, and then bowled along the floor, breaking up and gathering sawdust as it went. There was a breathless silence. The proprietor dropped the upraised carver, stood speechless for a moment, and then went out and wept bitterly. The occasion was too much for him. One after another the awed and hungry crowd put on their hats and departed, with sorrowful faces and watering mouths.

"For many years the hostelry has been in the

hands of the Moore family, and that the place may long remain under the management of that real good sportsman, Mr. Charles, we all sincerely trust, for he is the life and soul of Ye Olde C. C."

My friend of the *Sportsman* does not relate the whole story of the fall. The fall was great, but the number of customers who noticed the descent, if their subsequent tales could be believed, were like the landlord, a mighty host. As the late Mr. Moore used to say, the half of London must have been in the bar on that eventful day. The real fact of the fall was that the then head waiter, Tom, slipped on the stair, and pudding and he commingled at the foot.

Mr. Moore, as usual with his hat off, awaited in great solemnity the advent of the great dish. It came too quickly, and his anguish was too keen for tears. Sore at heart, he made his way as best he might to the wine office, and addressing in softened tones his son Charlie (the present landlord), said, "The pudding's down!"

"That's all right! Why aren't you carving it?"

"Yes! but it's down on the floor. Tom has dropped it down-stairs."

Then sank Mr. Moore into his chair, and the dining-room knew him not that day.





CHAPTER X

MR. GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA AND OTHERS ON THE "CHEESE"

For he's a jolly good fellow.—*Old Song*

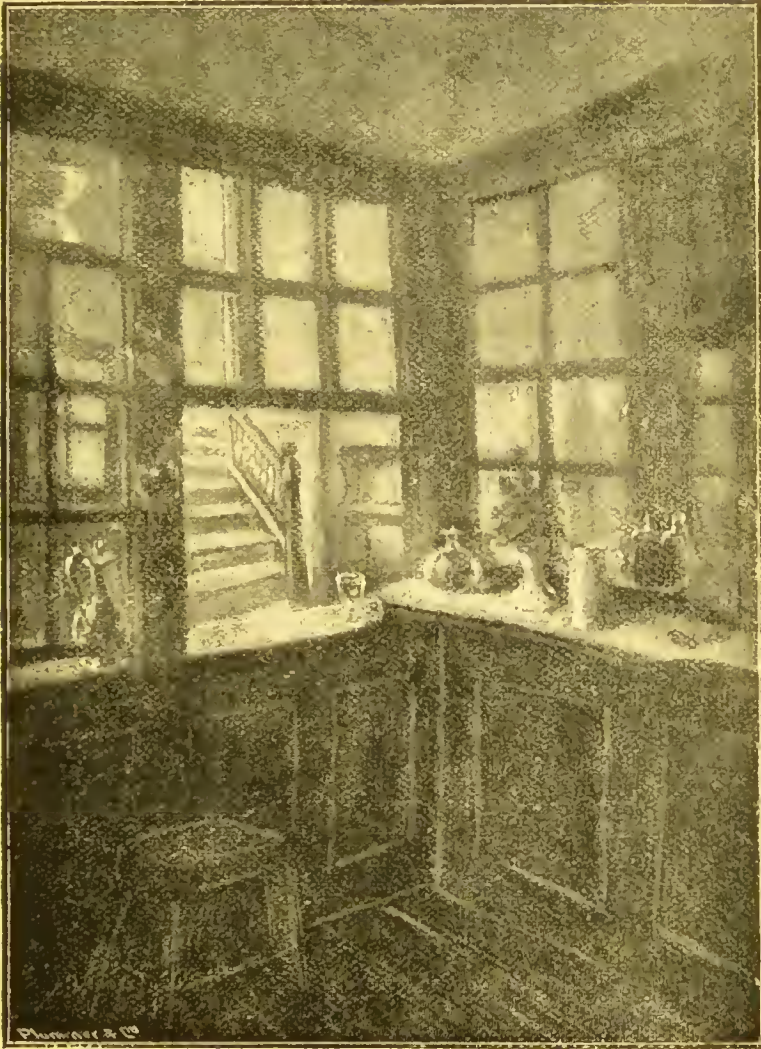
I HAVE already alluded to the death of Mr. Sala in 1895, and will now say no more about him than that no one was more capable of writing on the subject of Fleet Street than he. In an admirable paper entitled "Brain Street," he describes in "New and Old London" (Cassell, Petter, and Galpin) Wine Office Court and the "Cheshire Cheese."

"The vast establishments," says Mr. Sala, "of Messrs. Pewter and Antimony, type-founders (Alderman Antimony was Lord Mayor in the year '46); of Messrs. Quoin, Case, and Chappell, printers to the Board of Blue Cloth; of Messrs. Cutedge and Treecalf, bookbinders; with the smaller industries of Scawper and Tinttool, wood-engravers; and Treacle, Gluepot, and Lampblack, printing-roller makers, are packed together in the upper part of the court as closely as herrings in a cask. The 'Cheese' is at the Brain Street end. It is a little lop-sided,

wedged-up house, that always reminds you, structurally, of a high-shouldered man with his hands in his pockets. It is full of holes and corners and cupboards and sharp turnings; and in ascending the stairs to the tiny smoking-room you must tread cautiously, if you would not wish to be tripped up by plates and dishes momentarily deposited there by furious waiters. The waiters at the 'Cheese' are always furious. Old customers abound in the comfortable old tavern, in whose sanded-floored eating-rooms a new face is a rarity; and the guests and the waiter are the oldest of familiars. Yet the waiter seldom fails to bite your nose off as a preliminary measure when you proceed to pay him. How should it be otherwise when on that waiter's soul there lies heavy a perpetual sense of injury caused by the savoury odour of steaks, and 'mutts' to follow; of cheese bubbling in tiny tins—the 'specialty' of the house; of floury potatoes and fragrant green peas; of cool salads, and cooler tankards of bitter beer; of extra-creaming stout and 'goes' of Cork and 'rack,' by which is meant gin; and, in the winter-time, of Irish stew and rumpsteak pudding, glorious and grateful to every sense? To be compelled to run to and fro with these succulent viands from noon to late at night, without being able to spare time to consume them in comfort—where do waiters dine, and when, and how?—to be continually taking other people's money only for the purpose of handing it to other people—are not these grievances sufficient to cross-grain the temper of the mildest-mannered waiter? Somebody is always in a passion at the 'Cheese': either a customer because there is not fat enough on his 'point' steak, or because there is too much bone

in his mutton-chop ; or else the waiter is wroth with the cook ; or the landlord with the waiter, or the barmaid with all. Yes, there is a barmaid at the 'Cheese,' mewed up in a box not much bigger than a bird-cage, surrounded by groves of lemons, 'ones' of cheese, punch-bowls, and cruets of mushroom-catsup. I should not care to dispute with her, lest she should quoit me over the head with a punch-ladle, having a William-the-Third guinea soldered in the bowl."

In another part of "Old and New London," by Walter Thornbury, illustrated, Mr. Sala says : "Let it be noted in candour that law finds its way to the 'Cheese' as well as literature ; but the law is, as a rule, of the non-combatant, and, consequently, harmless order. Literary men who have been called to the bar, but do not practise ; briefless young barristers, who do not object to mingling with newspaper men ; with a sprinkling of retired solicitors (amazing old dogs these for old port wine ; the landlord has some of the same vig which served Hippocrene to Judge Blackstone when he wrote his 'Commentaries')—these make up the legal element of the 'Cheese.' Sharp attorneys in practice are not popular there. There is a legend that a process-server once came in at a back door to serve a writ ; but being detected by a waiter, was skilfully edged by that wary retainer into Wine Bottle Court, right past the person on whom he was desirous to inflict the 'Victoria by the grace, &c.' Once in the court, he was set upon by a mob of inky-faced boys just released from the works of Messrs. Ball, Roller, and Scraper, machine printers, and by the skin of his teeth only escaped being converted into pie."



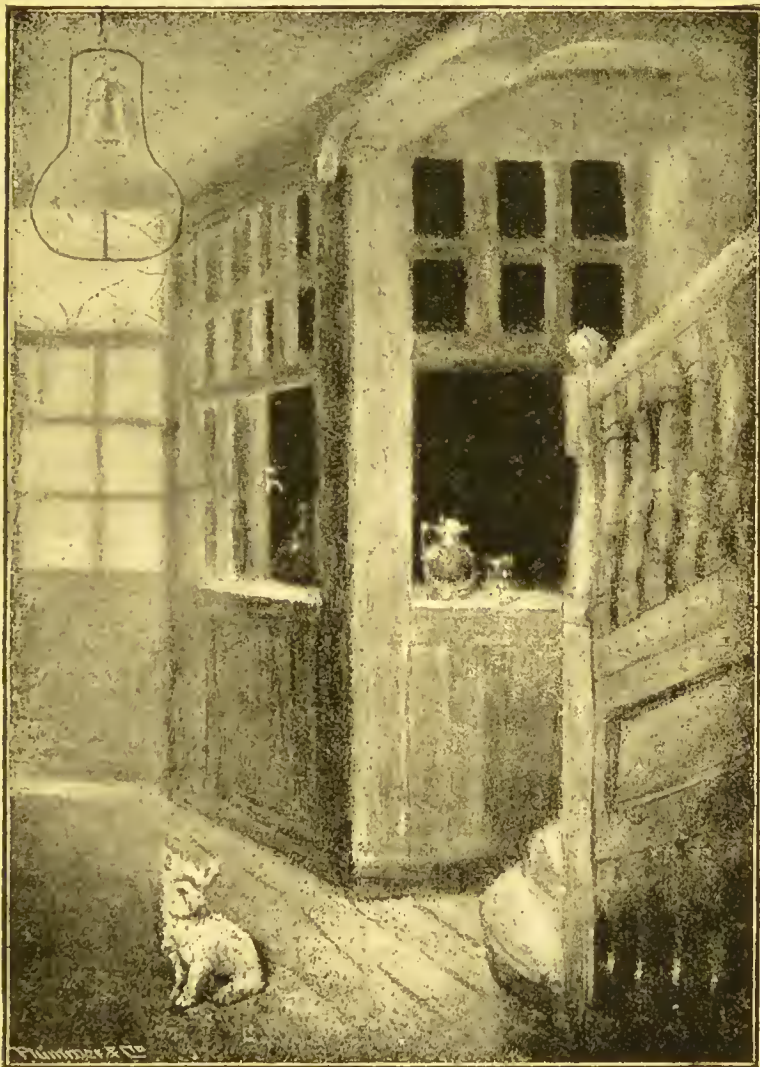
THE OLD BIRD-CAGE

"Old and New London," ch. 10, part iii. p. 123, also contains this paragraph:—

"Mr. William Sawyer¹ has also written a very admirable sketch of the 'Cheese' and its old-fashioned conservative ways, which we cannot resist quoting:—

" 'We are a close, conservative, inflexible body—we, the regular frequenters of the "Cheshire,"' says Mr. Sawyer. 'No new-fangled notions, new usages, new customs, or new customers for us. We have our history, our traditions, and our observations, all sacred and inviolable. Look around! There is nothing new, gaudy, flippant, or effeminately luxurious here. A small room, with heavily timbered windows, a low-planked ceiling. A huge projecting fireplace, with a great copper boiler always on the simmer, the sight of which might have roused even old John Willett, of the "Maypole," to admiration. High, stiff-backed, inflexible "settees," hard and grainy in texture, box off the guests half a dozen each to a table. Sawdust covers the floor, giving forth that peculiar faint odour which the French avoid by the use of the vine sawdust with its pleasant aroma. A chief ornament in which we indulge is a picture over the mantel-piece, a full-length of a now departed waiter, whom, in the long past, we caused to be painted, by subscription of the whole room, to commemorate his virtues and our esteem. We sit bolt upright round our tables, waiting, but not impatient. A time honoured solemnity is about to be observed, and we, the old stagers, is it for us to precipitate it?

¹ The late Mr. Sawyer was for many years the brilliant editor of *Funny Folks*. His articles signed "Rupert," in the *Budget*, were distinguished for their chaste humour and felicitous style. They have often been reprinted.



THE OLD BIRD-CAGE—FROM THE OUTSIDE

There are men in the room who have dined here every day for a quarter of a century—aye, the whisper goes round that one man did it on his wedding-day ! In all that time the more staid and well-regulated among us have observed a steady regularity of feeding. Five days in the week we have “ Rotherham steak ” —that mystery of mysteries—or our “ chop and chop to follow,” with the indispensable wedge of Cheddar —unless it is preferred stewed or toasted—and on Saturday decorous variety is afforded in a plate of the world-renowned “ Cheshire ” pudding. It is of this latter luxury that we are now assembled to partake, and that with all fitting ceremony and observance.’ ”





CHAPTER XI

THE PRESS AND THE "CHEESE"

Crown high the goblets with a cheerful draught
Enjoy the present hour ; adjourn the future thought.
DRYDEN'S *Virgil*

THE "Cheese" began early to get itself into the newspapers. Among the first notices is one which appeared in *Common Sense ; or, the Englishman's Journal*, of Saturday, April 23, 1737, running as follows :—

"On Sunday, April 17, one Harper, who formerly lived with Mr. Holyoake at the sign of the 'Old Cheshire Cheese,' in Wine Office Court, Fleet Street, for eight years, found Means to conceal himself in the House, and early on Monday Morning got into the Room where the Daughter lay, and where Mr. Holyoake (as he well knew) kept his Money ; and accordingly, he took away a small Box wherein was £200 and Notes to the Value of £600 more. The Child, hearing a Noise, happily awaked, and cry'd out, ' Mammy, Mammy, a Man has carried away the Box ; '

which alarm'd her Father and Mother, who lay near, and immediately they got up; which oblig'd the Fellow to hide himself in the Chimney, where he was discover'd, with the Box carefully ty'd up in a Handkerchief, and being secur'd, was afterwards carried before the Lord Mayor, who committed him to Newgate."

This extract is interesting as showing that Dr. Johnson was not the creator of the fortunes of the Old Cheshire Cheese, as some ill-conditioned people have alleged; and I doubt whether the present landlord keeps much more of coin and notes under his pillow than Mr. Holyoake left under the guardianship of his little daughter 149 years ago.

The next public notice which I have been able to trace also relates to crime, this time somewhat more serious than the filching of the day's takings.

In the *Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser* of Monday, August 9, 1784, we read an account of an attempted murder in the "Cheese." It appears that a porter in the Temple induced a woman who had cohabited with, and then deserted him, to accept a drink in the "Cheese," "where, starting up in a fit of frenzy, he cut the woman's throat."

"Before the transaction he had made several attempts to destroy himself at Mr. Bosher's, the Rainbow, opposite the end of Chancery Lane, in Fleet Street, and other public-houses in the neighbourhood."

What happened to the frenzied porter for taking part in this "transaction" I have not discovered, and probably nobody in this century would be very interested to know.

A notice of the "Cheese" in 1815, under the ownership of Mr. Carlton, appears on p. 122.

Coming to a more recent period we find the press positively littering the "Cheese" with its broadsheets. *Punch*, for April 14, 1864, describes a famous evening at the "Cheese." Mr. John Cordy Jeaffreson, no mean authority, in his "A Book about the Table," mentions the "Cheese" as one of the three houses in the immediate neighbourhood of the Inns of Court worthy of comparison with those near St. Paul's, and so the references go on ever spreading till they cross the Atlantic and even return from the Antipodes.

It is impossible within the limits of this little book to print all that has been written about the "Cheese," but a short selection may be permitted.

The *Kent Examiner and Ashford Chronicle* of June 20, 1885, contains a reference to the Old City Taverns. It states: "One by one our old-fashioned taverns are being improved off the face of the earth, or, if not done away with entirely, become so helplessly renewed with modern style, as to be beyond recognition. But there is still one left to us, and almost within a stone's throw of the Old Cock. Up a court—Wine Office Court—there stands, or did last week, that most ancient of inns, 'Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese,' with its sawdust floor and oaken benches. Although the origin of this house is not altogether involved in obscurity, there is a decided want of complete details as to its very early history. It is very generally believed that Shakespeare was one of its numerous frequenters, but undoubtedly one famous man was, namely—François Marie Arouet, otherwise Voltaire—while often enough were present Bolingbroke, Pope, and Congreve, and it is well known that Rare Ben Jonson was one of its most jolly frequenters. Coming down to more modern

times, among the many customers of the house have been Douglas Jerrold, Mark Lemon, Shirley Brooks, Tom Taylor, Tom Hood, and last, but not least, Thackeray and Dickens. As in the past, it still enjoys the reputation of supplying a good article ; but the specialty of the house is its celebrated steak pudding, served up on Wednesdays and Saturdays during the winter months, the secret of whose manufacture has never been allowed to penetrate beyond the mazes of Wine Office Court, and the recipe for which is said to be carefully deposited every Saturday afternoon in a patent iron safe of unexampled strength."

"A Walk up Fleet Street " is the title of an article that appeared in the *Sunday Times*. The following is an extract : "The Cheshire Cheese is not imposing in appearance, nor is it even to be seen from the street. Two little courts lead to its somewhat dingy portals ; portals much frequented by the London correspondents of provincial journals and gallery reporters. More or less throughout every day of the week barristers and journalists—even members of Parliament are not always missing—come to this house for their dinner, and sit contentedly round the sides of two good old-fashioned rooms. But it is on Saturday that the Cheshire Cheese is seen at its best. Then it is that 'rump-steak pudding' makes its appearance ; announced all the week, anxiously expected, come at last ! No one need to ask whether the pudding is an attraction. Let him look into the larger of the two rooms and judge for himself. There are ten tables round the apartment, each fitted with benches for six. For nearly half an hour sixty hungry men have been waiting anxiously for the

arrival of that pudding. Granted that some of them are briefless barristers ; assumed that some gain an honest living by reporting the occurrence of tragedies ; allowed that 'special wire' men, whose duty it is to sit up all night for the purpose of purchasing an early copy of the London dailies and obtaining the best news therefrom for the country papers, are there ; never did briefless barrister wait more eagerly for his first blue roll of paper ; never did 'liner' look more anxiously for a good sensational murder ; never did 'special wire' man buy *Times* or *Telegraph* more expectantly than do these now wait for their pudding. The pudding itself is no mean despicable dish. Its size is enormous, its appearance vast. King Arthur's pie, which boasted pieces of suet as big as any two thumbs, was poor compared with this rumpsteak luxury. And as it is borne in triumphantly by waiters three, and placed on a little table just below the portrait of a *garçon* of the old school, who, with bottle and corkscrew in hand, is represented as making a dreadful grimace at the waiters for pudding in solemn conclave assembled, every lawyer, reporter, and reviewer gives a huge sniff, as though determined to make the most of the delicacy which is before him. But no indecency of haste is noticeable on the part of those who bear rule and authority over the dish. True that the room is full of impatient men, who, munching their bread, shuffling on their seats, peering steadfastly at the pudding, and hating each other heartily for coming to lessen the general share, beckon and wink at the waiters, show, mysteriously, little pieces of silver, and otherwise intimate their ardent desire to be served. The landlord of the house well knows the importance

of the occasion, and acquits himself like a man. His customers may hurry, but he is too well aware of what is right and proper at so interesting a moment to rush or move too quickly. So he glides in gently, looks up at the grinning picture, glances at the hungry ones around him, calls the waiters up into position at the front of the pudding, sharpens his knife, inspects the spoon, and in one way or another gets comfortably through another five minutes, to the intense agony of his patrons. But at last he pierces the pudding! Every eye is upon him, every man present looks as though he would make a rush and possess himself of it all; yet the landlord faints not, but calmly cuts up twelve pieces, deliberately adding meat thereto, on the various plates, till having finished the first 'batch,' he gently says 'Go,' and a dozen of the famished are served. Forty-eight men hate that landlord and his myrmidons intensely for three minutes, when they themselves are served, and are able to imitate the more fortunate twelve. For a brief space all are eating ravenously; yet the landlord moves not, he knows full well that every man of them will send up for a second plateful, and the event shows he is right. But he is no longer viewed with feelings of unfriendliness; the pudding has done its work, and as the second plates are served slowly out, every lawyer and journalist leans back and smiles complacently. The consumption of the pudding now progresses but slowly; bitter beer is more frequently called for; wine is added thereto; while by three o'clock most of the sixty have departed, fully resolved to have a share of the next week's excellent pudding."

The *Reporter*, of October 28, 1874, says of the "Cheese":—

"We have occasionally used this old-fashioned house for over a quarter of a century, and that for its chops and steaks, cold beef and salad, and marvellous rump-steak pudding, and for the alacrity with which these edibles are supplied, the establishment is unmatchable in the metropolis. Besides, the malt liquors are of the strongest and the best brew, and the whiskies are mellow and old; whilst the ancient punch, which is served exactly as compounded in the days of Dr. Johnson, is simply nectar worthy of elevating even the gods."

In "Some Gossip about Famous Taverns" the *Licensed Victuallers' Gazette* writes:—

"What man who has ever been called into Fleet Street, either on business or pleasure, does not know the sawdusted floor and old-time appointments of the Cheshire Cheese? Who would dare to confess ignorance of the Brobdingnagian chops, the world-famous point steaks, the stewed cheese, which constitute its main attractions all the year round? Who has not here devoted himself during the hot summer months, in the cool dining-room which seems ever impervious to the sun's rays, to the manufacture of an elaborate salad to enjoy with his cold beef? And who, again, has ever yet been so fortunate as to witness that appetising procession to be seen every Saturday during the winter months, when Mr. Moore, the master of the house, in dress coat clad, and armed with a mighty carver, preceeds into the room that mighty steak and oyster pudding, the secret of whose manufacture has never been allowed to penetrate beyond the mazes of Wine Office Court, and the recipe for which is carefully deposited every

Saturday evening in a patent iron safe of unexampled strength, the lock of which is guarded by a Deane's revolver, a Derringer, a bowie knife, and two Borgia daggers, all ready to spring out on the slightest attempt at lock-picking, to deal instant annihilation on the rash intruder?

"A tavern among taverns is, indeed, the Cheshire Cheese. It is impossible to deny or to fight against its attractions. Day after day, and year after year, the *habitués* grumble and growl about the awkward, uncomfortable seats, the time-worn tables, the uncarpeted floor, the narrow, inconvenient bar, in which, whatever the direction of the wind, all the draughts of an army of weathercocks seem to be collected; but day after day, and year after year, they continue to return, and are miserable if circumstances compel them to be absent.

"Men of letters of all grades greatly affect the Cheshire Cheese, and it is seldom, indeed, the chance visitor may not see among the diners three or four of the men whose pens influence the policy of our most powerful journals. But journalists, fortunately, can show themselves in public without being stared at, as are all other prominent members of the art world, for, thanks to the anonymity of our press,

The world knows nothing of its greatest men,

when the great ones take to journalism as a profession. Yet I can assure my readers that, as a body, journalists have a very keen sense of the excellent in all things relating to eating and drinking. With them the beautiful and true is paraphrased into the genuine and the good, and when the guiding spirit of a vast confederacy of the press, a special

correspondent whose letters from many lands have been eagerly read by the public, a younger colleague who has not infrequently taken his readers into his confidence as to his dinners, a watchful votary of the turf, whose gastronomic powers are a proverb among his brethren, the portly and gigantic editor of a weekly paper, the bespectacled dramatic critic of the same sheets, and the writer of this gossip are all known to patronise one tap, it may be safely assumed that tap is a good one; and herein lies the answer to my question. The secret of the success of the Cheshire Cheese is that everything sold within its doors is good. For this we prefer its sanded floors to marble halls, for this we listen curiously to the weird cry of the waiter up the crooked staircase of 'Rudderhumbake,' which, by old experience, we know heralds the approach of a choice cut from the mighty rump of a succulent shorthorn or an Aberdeen steer."

THE COMMON SERJEANT.

It having been widely rumoured that the influence of the late Mr. Moore contributed largely to the election of Sir William T. Charley as Common Serjeant of the City of London, *Truth*, of April 18, 1878, hit off the situation of the Corporation which had the power to elect the criminal judges of London in a long poem, the last verse of which runs:—

"Long may it last, and unreformed, its judges to elect,
And by its wise and worthy choice gain all the land's respect :
But, meanwhile, all the candidates who hope to win with ease,
Had best keep in with B. A. Moore, and dine oft at the
 'Cheese' !"

The *Philadelphia Times* of October 1884 thus refers to the "Cheese":—

"A famous man who haunted the 'Cheese' was Voltaire, side by side with Bolingbroke, Pope, and Congreve. The expression, 'He's not the cheese,' applies to one who was unequal, by his want of position and cleverness, to associate with the regular frequenters of the Old Cheshire Cheese. There is to-day an old play in manuscript in Scotland, written in Rare Ben Jonson's day, in which these lines occur :

"Heaven bless 'The Cheese' and all its goodly fare—
I wish to Jove I could go daily there.
Then fill a bumper up, my good friend, please—
May fortune ever bless the 'Cheshire Cheese.'"

The *City Press* (October 30, 1875) gives a long notice of a book by Mr. Charles Hindley upon tavern anecdotes and sayings, including the origin of tavern signs. The reviewer says :—

"Unfortunately they are going out of fashion. Society more and more frequents the club. We do not think that any great gain. Club life is solitary and grand, tavern life is social; and London was never more brilliant than when Johnson and Boswell dined at the Mitre or the Cheshire Cheese, and were not only witty themselves, but the cause of wit in other men. Ben Jonson loved the 'Cheese'; and at one time you had only to walk into a Fleet Street coffee-house to become familiar with all the choice spirits of the age. Dean Swift, Addison, and Steele affected the tavern; so did Sheridan, and so did Lord Eldon, and so, indeed, did all men of mark down to our own time."

In another article, August 24, 1887, the *City Press* says: "There is the chair in which snuffy old Dr.

Johnson sat and dogmatised. There is the room in which probably Burke and Boswell, Fox and Sheridan, Garrick and Goldsmith met the great philosopher and lexicographer in full conclave. A few steps off, in Gough Square, is the tall, plain, many-windowed house in which Dr. Johnson lived."

The following, from the *Fort Worth (Texas) Daily Gazette* will be read with interest:—

"YE RUMPE STEAKE PUDDINGE.

"While I am on the subject of 'food,' I must be permitted to mention that I enjoyed the privilege of partaking of 'ye rumpe steake puddinge' a few days since at no less celebrated board than 'The Cheese,' Wine Office Court, Fleet Street. 'The Cheese,' or to give it its full title, 'Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese,' is now the most historical tavern of all the old taverns in London. Nearly all the other taverns have had to make way for the more modern restaurant or public-house. Little is known, it seems, of the very early history of the place. A *brochure* entitled 'Round London,' published in 1725, describes the house as 'Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese tavern, near ye Flete Prison, an eating house for goodly fare.' And now in 1883, or very near the beginning of the year 1884, I can bear cheerful witness to the fact that it still deserves to be classed with the very few public places in London where one can secure 'goodly fare.' The rump-steak pudding, which is the special feature of the place, is certainly toothsome, and is not apt to be speedily forgotten by the epicure. It has been served promptly at one o'clock P.M. every Saturday 'since

when the memory of man runneth not to the contrary,' and the particular one that I assisted to dissect was enjoyed by quite a hundred persons. Though nominally a 'steak pudding,' there are very many other ingredients in the dish than rump steak. It is said that for more than 200 years the old tavern has changed hands but twice, and that it is now in the hands of the third family that has helped to keep up its ancient reputation. It is also said that the recipe by which the pudding is builded is a secret that belongs to the place, and is as secret an heirloom as the old oil painting of Henry Todd, who, according to the inscription on the portrait, commenced waiter at the 'Old Cheshire Cheese' February 17, 1812. This picture was, according to the inscription again, 'painted by Wageman, July 1827, subscribed for by the gentlemen frequenting the coffee-room, and presented to Mr. Dolamore (the landlord) in trust, to be handed down as a heirloom to all future landlords of the Old Cheshire Cheese, Wine Office Court, Fleet Street.' "





CHAPTER XII

WHAT THE WORLD SAYS OF THE "CHEESE"

That all-softening, overpowering knell,
The tocsin of the soul—the dinner-bell.—BYRON

THE "Diner Out," in the *Evening Standard* of January 10, 1867, writes :—

"In each of the apartments on the ground floor is a full-length portrait, in oil, of a departed waiter—subscribed for upon his retirement by the gentlemen 'using' the house. The one which most strikes my memory at the moment is the representation of a portly, respectable—scrupulously respectable—middle-aged man, clad in a costume worn early in the century—that is to say, the coat is of blue, the buttons are gilt, the cravat is a cheerful roll surmounting a frilled shirt, and the legs know no trousers but the breeches and stockings of departed days, when well made men 'stood upon their legs' in something more than the merely literal sense of the term. The background of the picture is a faithful representation of a section of the room in which it is hung. The box before which the waiter is standing, opening a bottle of port (I say port, because a man would never open a bottle of sherry with the same grave, but

complacent, air of responsibility), is a speaking likeness, and so is evidently the representation of the guest for whom the order is being executed—a person even more respectable than the waiter, if possible, with a very high coat collar, his hair all brushed up to the top of his head, and a cute knowledge of wine depicted in every lineament of his countenance. You may be sure that no inferior quality is being opened for him. Indeed, the waiter is as incapable of deceiving as the guest of being deceived. The wine is evidently of that degree of excellence which impels people to talk about it while they drink it—a wine which is its own aim and end—not a mere stimulating drink, setting men on to be enthusiastic upon general subjects. The diner is plainly the model diner of the Cheshire Cheese, as the waiter is the model waiter. The presentation of such a testimonial to a favourite waiter is characteristic of the Cheshire Cheese as compared with the Cock.¹ There is more intimate companionship among the frequenters, and a larger proportion of them make the house their habitual resort. Even strangers will consort together sometimes, which is very seldom the case at the Cock. I suspect that the main reason for this difference is that at the Cock the legal element predominates; while at the Cheshire Cheese the commercial and miscellaneous elements are in the majority.

¹ The Cock, the birthplace of Lord Tennyson's "Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue," no longer stands on the northern side of Fleet Street. On its site is erected the Law Courts branch of the Bank of England. A new Cock, however, has arisen on the southern side of the street, and thither some of the old pews and furniture have been transported.

"The Cheshire Cheese is famous for steak pudding, agreeably tempered by kidneys, larks, and oysters. This dish, which is often ordered for private parties, and even for private houses, is frequently made the occasion of social gatherings of an extensive character—so much so, indeed, that Madame Roland might have extended her celebrated apostrophe to Liberty by saying—'O Steak Pudding, how much conviviality is committed in thy name!' Whatever you get at the 'Cheshire' is sure to be good and capitally cooked."

From an article entitled "At the Cheshire Cheese," which appeared in the *Commercial Travellers' Review*, I extract the following: "At one o'clock—the time at which the 'Cheese' is most frequented—we accompanied our friends up Fleet Street, and then by devious ways and turnings, more than enough to upset our geography, until we finally arrived at that part of Wine Office Court where the 'Cheshire' stands. We were ushered into what seemed most like the after cabin of a steamer, with comfortably arranged and well appointed miniature tables on either side, attended by trim obliging waiters, and everything else equally inviting, and fully justifying our friend's previous good report. 'Roast Lamb,' 'Roast Beef,' 'Boiled Beef,' 'Beefsteak Pie,' and——'Thanks—plates for four of the first, with the various &c., and four tankards of stout.' 'Yes, sir'—and away vanishes our excellent friend, the waiter, to the unknown regions where cook holds sway and reigns supreme, only to return in less time than it takes to record the fact, with all that was calculated to make us content and comfortable. . . . We enjoyed one of the pleasantest afternoons it has been

Special Days for Special Dishes.



Wines, Spirits, Beers, Cigars, &c., of the finest Quality.

- Mondays:** at 12.30 Irish Stew.
at 6 Stewed Steaks.
- Tuesdays:** at 12.30 Boiled Beef, &c.
at 6 Irish Stew.
at 6.30 Marrow Bones.
- Wednesdays:** Ye famous Rumpsteak,
bark, Oyster, Kidney and
Mushroom puddings, served
at 4 and 6.30.
- Thursdays:** at 12.30 Stewed Steak.
at 6 Irish Stew.
at 6.30 Marrow Bones.
- Fridays:** at 12.30 Irish Stew.
at 6 Tripe and Onions.
Baked Potatoes.
- Saturdays:** Ye Pudding, at 4.30 and 6.

Yr Ordinary Fare.

Mutton Chop. Rump Steak. Pork Chop.
Kidney. Sausages. Stewed Chicken.
Buck Rabbit. Baked Eggs, &c.

Open on Sundays: 1 to 3, and 6 till 10.

Wholesale Department and Entrance to Cellars: 145 Fleet Street.

our good fortune to participate in for many a day. Pleasant dinner—pleasant company—over a well-brewed bowl of palatably-flavoured sipping punch, that engendered pleasant reflections on past assemblies and present associations—in the heart of dear old London—surely no alloy was possible in our midst, and nothing more was needed save the presence of some other far-away friends to overflow the cup of pleasure at the 'Cheshire Cheese.' "

In the *World* of December 24, 1884, there is an able article on "The Old Chop Houses," in which the writer, going back on a memory of thirty years, says: "There was only one other house that excelled the old Cheshire Cheese for a steak, and that was the Blue Posts in Cork Street. At this admirable tavern, the steaks, cut a great deal thicker than is usual, were hung for days in a cool, roomy, draughty larder, and were never placed flat on a dish or plate till cooked. By consequence they were, *when* cooked, tender and juicy, as few London steaks now are. But as regards mutton chops, the Cheshire Cheese was unrivalled in London, or anywhere short of Barnsley, where a mutton chop is about a third part of a loin, not reckoning the chump end, and where this doubled or trebled chop is so taperly trimmed and freed from its superfluous fat, that when cooked, by a process which I take to be rather roasting than grilling, and served with the fillet under, like a sirloin of beef, it might, by virtue of its shapely plumpness, be taken for a roast partridge or grouse. The old landlord of the Cheshire Cheese was wont to plume himself mightily, as he had good cause for doing, on the quality and the proper cooking of his potatoes. No pains did he or his servants spare in keeping the

relays fresh and fresh—one under another, hot and hot. In very unfavourable seasons he would dissuade his customers from asking to be served with the tubers he could not confidently recommend, declaring in a tone at once regretful and apologetic that they were not fit food even for cattle. But these were exceptional days in the old life of the Cheshire Cheese. On revisiting the house lately I found it somewhat changed. One of the snug rooms, my favourite in the olden days, had been turned into an old-fashioned bar. The other retained its ancient character—the partitioned tables and bare deal seats, the old fireplace, heavy window sashes, low-beamed ceiling and sawdusted floor. There, too, was Wageman's capially painted portrait of Henry Todd, a former head waiter, who served in what was called the coffee-room from 1812 to 1827."

Under the head of "Public Refreshment," in Knight's "London," vol. iv. p. 314, are the following remarks:—

"They are neither eating-houses nor taverns, nor do they belong to classes hereafter to be noticed. The solid food to be procured is chiefly in the form of a steak or a chop, with such small appendages as are necessary to form a meal.

"There are some of these houses which have been attended by one generation after another of guests, comprising merchants, bankers, and commercial men of every grade. The portrait of the founder or a favourite waiter may, perhaps, be seen over the fireplace in the best room; and the well rubbed tables, chairs, and benches tell of industry oft repeated. Sometimes the older houses exhibit a waiter who has gone through his daily routine for half a century.

There is a dingy house in a court in Fleet Street where the chops and steaks are unrivalled. Who that has tasted there that impossible thing of private cookery, a *hot* mutton chop—a second brought when the first is despatched—has not pleasant recollections of the never-ending call to the cook of ‘two muttons to follow’?”

In Charles Dickens’s “A Tale of Two Cities” (book ii. chap. 4), after the trial at the Old Bailey, the text proceeds:—

“‘I begin to think I *am* faint.”

“‘Then why the devil don’t you dine? I dined, myself, while those numskulls were deliberating which world you should belong to—this or some other. Let me show you the nearest tavern to dine well at.’

“Drawing his arm through his own, he took him down Ludgate Hill to Fleet Street, and so, up a covered way, into a tavern.¹ Here they were shown into a little room, where Charles Darnay was seen recruiting his strength with a good plain dinner and good wine; while Carton sat opposite to him at the same table, with his separate bottle of port before him, and his fully half-insolent manner upon him.”

JEEMS PIPES ON THE “CHEESE.”

“Jeems Pipes, of Pipesville,” whose writings are much appreciated in the United States, in a letter dated from Regent Street, London, June 26, 1879, to the San Francisco *Daily Evening Post*, thus refers to the Cheshire Cheese:—

“It really is impossible in this big city of four

¹ Indubitably the Cheshire Cheese.

million inhabitants to know what to write about ; so many things come up to charm, to dazzle, to astonish and to talk of, that unless you make a note of it at once you either forget or it vanishes for ever from your memory. So I am now going to make a start with a little description of one or two of the old taverns or chop houses in this famous old town, commencing with

‘THE OLD CHESHIRE CHEESE.’

This is, perhaps, at the present writing, one of the most popular of the old hostelries, and when you consider that for over two hundred years it has been in existence, and has been patronised by celebrities of every degree, rank, and station, and even royalty—for Charles II. ate a chop here with Nell Gwynne—and the genial landlord will actually show you the seats used by Dr. Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith, even to the marks on the wainscotted wall made by their greased wigs ; the corner where the author of ‘Pendennis’ and ‘The Newcomes’ sat, or where Charles Dickens, Mark Lemon, Shirley Brooks, Douglas Jerrold, John Leech, and a host of others enjoyed their ‘arf-and-’arf and toasted cheese. The tavern is situated up a little narrow passage called

‘WINE OFFICE COURT.’

I don’t think it can be more than three feet wide. On the right-hand side of it is the entrance. Over the door is a glass lamp painted red, with the words ‘Old Cheshire Cheese’ on it. Now, what think you this out-of-the-way, ‘cabined, cribbed, confined,’ dark, dreary, uninviting-looking place would sell for to-day ?

Why, about £40,000, or 200,000 dols. The present owner has occupied it over twenty years. The proprietor before him had possession of it for forty, and sold it to the present landlord for £20,000. So it continued to be a mine of wealth to him, and he has no idea of either selling, giving up, or retiring from his 'cosy retreat.' But, oh! what chops, what steaks, what cold lamb and salad, what beef-steak pudding you do get here. It is indeed a revelation! And, should you be permitted to ascend to the upper part of the building and join the family circle, in elegantly furnished rooms, the walls adorned with paintings of Rubens, Vandyke, and Moreland, a library of choicest classic authors, articles of vertu, and other evidences of comfort and ease, you will be introduced to a charming lady, Mrs. Moore, who, with a family of affectionate children, dispenses her hospitality in the most genial manner; and, when I inform you that Mr. Moore (see page III) is a vestryman and churchwarden of St. Bride's, will shortly become councilman, and probably Alderman and Lord Mayor, you will see that it is no common thing to be the landlord of the 'Cheshire Cheese.'"



THE LATE MR. MOORE

Mr. Moore did not live to attain the dignity

which "Jeems Pipes" presaged. He died in 1886, loved and respected in his life, and deeply lamented at his death by the troops of friends who knew him both in his private and business life. As a memento,



which I am sure will be appreciated by everyone who enjoyed his acquaintance, I am enabled by the courtesy of the family, to give this excellent reproduction of his portrait. Mr. "Charles" Moore, whose glance enlivens this page, succeeded his father in the management of the Old "Cheese." He is both a church-

warden and a Common Councilman of the City of London, and may reasonably hope to reach still higher dignities as years roll on.

THE COOKERY CODE.

The following extract from a London letter in the *New York World* of September 14, 1884, will not be out of place here. The writer, it ought to be observed, is a lady. She says:—

"London abounds in historic taverns, but of them all none are more historic and interesting than the

'Cheese.' To eat a steak here is not to masticate fried cork, while the tankards of bitter ale, foaming and delicious, with which you wash down the steak, are worth a long journey to enjoy. The folk-lore of this famous haunt is interesting, not alone to tavern-loving, but to general, posterity, although as to a complete and detailed account of its very early history there is much of obscurity. While there are no positive proofs, there are authentic legends that Shakespeare spent many an idle hour at this place, because it was on his way to the Blackfriars Theatre, in Playhouse Yard, Ludgate Hill, of which he was so long a time absolute manager. In his time the play began at 1 P.M. and ended at 5 P.M., at which hour the wits of the town mustered forces in Fleet Street haunts.

"In modern times, William Makepeace Thackeray, Charles Dickens, and now to-day that prince of diners and *bons vivants*, George Augustus Sala, have frequented the Cheshire Cheese and waxed eloquent over its comforts and subtle charms. Both Dickens and Thackeray knew how to appreciate a good inn, and, after singing the praises of the bill of fare, pay deserved compliments to the waiters. Men who serve the frequenters of the Cheshire grow grey in the service, and each boasts his own particular customers. Of the younger waiters all are most civil, and the young women at the bar are not only polite, but ladylike in manners and appearance.

"It is surprising how soon one gets used to the innovation of the feminine bar-tender, and it is not to be questioned that it is a good custom, productive of greater refinement among the male frequenters, and, where the young women conduct themselves

modestly, in no wise degrading to their minds or morals.

"It matters little what hour you select to visit 'Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese,' you will have plenty to amuse and instruct you, and always find the pretty barmaids in the bar room attentive and clever. The cutting of the rump steak and kidney pie is a spear-ing process performed by the proprietor, and often as many as three, even four waiters are needed to lift the huge smoking hot pie to the centre table, while often from thirty to sixty hungry men wait at the various tables for a triangle of this toothsome viand. Take my word for it, you will have a great desire for a second help, and even though, like myself, you are a petticoat wearer, no one will annoy you or even look surprised at your devoting an evening among the odd masculine characters nightly frequenting 'Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese.'"

The writer of the above description pays a well-earned compliment to the "feminine bar-tender"—to adopt the American language for the moment; their courtesy is unfailing and their good-nature beyond praise. A word might even be insinuated here in favour of all the employées, from the bar-boy up—perhaps their attentions are stimulated by the expectation of stray coppers. A funny custom should be noted here: the boy, whatever name was bestowed on him at baptism, is always "Charles"; the porter is "George"; and the second waiter is always "James." This is invariable, and I have seen a youth proceed from Charles through the stages of George and James, until he arrived at Tom, which last, strange to say, was his own name. The head waiter is allowed to bear his own name, but the others must

wear the names attached to their positions. This sort of thing is, after all, nothing new, for Shakespeare in "King John" probably gave the "Cheese" the cue thus :—

"For if his name be George, I'll call him Peter,
For new-made honour doth forget men's names."

In an article, long and eloquent, written by Mr. W. Outram Tristram, and delightfully illumed by the pencil of Mr. Herbert Railton, the *English Illustrated Magazine* of December 1889 gives, under the title of "A Storied Tavern," a most interesting account of this old house.

"Here," says the writer, "is no home for kickshaws and cigarettes. From this kitchen comes no sample of fashionable culinary art, that 'art with poisonous honey stolen from France.' Nothing of that kind obtains at the Cheshire Cheese. Here the narrowed kingdom lies of point steaks turned to a second and served hissing on plates supernaturally hot, of chops gargantuan in size and inimitable in tenderness and flavour, of cheese bubbling sympathetically in tiny tins, of floury potatoes properly cooked, of tankards of bitter beer, of extra creaming stout, of a rump-steak and oyster pudding served on Saturdays only,¹ and so much the specialty of the house, that I must deal with it hereafter. All smacks here of that England of solid comfort and solid plenty.

"There is a collection of useful

IMPLEMENTS OF INEBRIETY

in the bar of the Cheshire Cheese, which brings the place's past more vividly, perhaps, before one than any view of its sanded floors, low ceilings, or quaint

¹ On Wednesdays as well, as the menu on p. 106 proves.

staircase, disappearing suddenly from the entrance passage in formal but inviting bend.

"Of its great guests in the past a list might be made, to judge from suggestions given me, equalling in length some of those amazing petitions which are offered on stray occasions to the consideration of an astounded House of Commons. The catalogue of the ships would be a comedy to it. For it must be remembered that the 'Cheese' has stood where it now stands for considerably over 200 years (three centuries is claimed for it by its more ardent devotees), and situate as it is in what has been always more or less a literary quarter of London, its sanded floors have been trod no doubt in all periods by distinguished literary feet. But to suggest that

SHAKESPEARE

ate here is, I think, a mistake. I have no doubt that he may have done so,

MAY HAVE STROLLED IN FOR A CHOP

in the intervals of rehearsing some masterpiece at the Blackfriars Theatre in Playhouse Yard; but so many great men have feasted here after him, that as a feeder his impression is faint. The belief, too, that the left hand dining-room was in Herrick's mind when he apostrophised rare Ben Jonson in lines that most people know by heart, is founded, I fear, on a corrupt reading of a famous passage, though the 'Cheese' in this instance may be perhaps allowed the benefit of a doubt.¹

¹ In the first edition of this book the allusion to the famous passage runs in this wise: "Was it not in that left-hand room,

"But with these doubtful celebrities subtracted, the house's roll of famous visitors remains sufficiently full. Voltaire was certainly here; Bolingbroke in this place cracked many a bottle of Burgundy; and Congreve's wit flashed wine-inspired, while Pope, sickly and intolerant of tobacco smoke, suffered under these low roofs I doubt not many a headache. But it is of its distinguished visitors of later days that the Cheshire Cheese as it now stands reminds one most fully. Johnson, Garrick, Goldsmith and Chatterton were undoubted frequenters. Many a time the great Samuel, turning heavily in his accustomed seat, and beset by some pert sailing pinnace, brought, like a galleon manœuvring, his ponderous artillery to bear. Goldsmith lived at No. 6 Wine Office Court, where he wrote or partly wrote the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' his flagging inspiration possibly gaining assistance from the tavern's famed Madeira.

"His (Dr. Johnson's) frequent, nay, nightly visits entering from Wine Office Court, that Herrick thus apostrophised Rare Ben Jonson?—

'Ah, Ben!
Say how or when
Shall we, thy guests,
Meet at those lyric feasts,
Made at the Sun,
The CHEESE, the Triple Tun;
Where we such clusters had,
As made us nobly wild, not mad?
And yet each verse of thine
Outdid the meat, outdid the frolic wine.'

"In some cases I find," says Mr. Reid, "'The Dog' is printed instead of 'The Cheese'; but I feel convinced that 'The Cheese,' being opposite the Triple Tun, or Three Tuns, is the house which Herrick meant."

here are matters of history, and have been vouched for on

AUTHORITY BEYOND DISPUTE.

The time is not so far distant when old frequenters to the house were to be found who had drunk and eaten with men whom Johnson had conversationally annihilated, and who recalled the circumstance with an extreme clearness of recollection. A recollection this which joined the record of two generations of the tavern's great visitors. And the second generation offered names not unworthy to compare with the first, such notabilities as these figuring in the list:—Dickens, Thackeray, Douglas Jerrold, Mark Lemon, Shirley Brooks, Tom Taylor, John Forster, Sir Alexander Cockburn, Professor Aytoun, Tom Hood, Andrew Halliday, and Charles Mathews.

“That the future of such an historic tavern as this Cheshire Cheese is safe, is a hope reasonably to be relied upon. Its *clientèle* is compact and faithful; its sequestered site, out of any possible main line of improvement, guarantees it against the deplorable fate which overtook its great rival and prototype. The Cock perished to make way for a more imposing structure, a fact which posterity may have cause to dwell upon. No further such improvements, we trust, are meditated in this part of Fleet Street. Long may the ripe Old Cheshire Cheese stand! In its independence and simplicity, in the flavour of the fireside which lurks about it, it is symbolical of the best and strongest side of our hospitable life. No false note of entertainment rings here. In an age of imitations transplanted to an uncongenial soil this old house

glories in its originality still. It is a tavern, and not a restaurant. It is English."

Miss Sarah Morton, a special correspondent of the *Illustrated Buffalo Express* (N.Y.), gives in her paper, February 15, 1891, an amusing report of her visit to the "Cheese." "It was," she says, "with slow and lingering steps that I emerged from a visit to the ghastly yet fascinating Tower of London, by the way of old St. Paul's Churchyard into Fleet Street, towards the 'Cheshire Cheese.' 'Twas the night of the beef-steak pudding, a delicacy served only twice a week, and in precisely the same way that it has been served in this very place for 200 years.

"Women have been known to penetrate into this ancient resort for famous men, just to see the place and wonder at the impressions left on the wall by the big-wigs of England's geniuses of the olden time, but to eat—never. I was resolved, however, that for once at least a woman should dine on beef-steak pudding at the Cheshire Cheese. A timid knock at the door was quickly responded to by an appallingly dignified personage, who said, 'Certainly, come in, come in.'

"One feels just like sidling into an old-fashioned church pew, for the three tables on the left, each accommodating six persons, are provided with high-backed benches black with age.

"'Will you wait for the pudding?' asks the Imposing Personage.

"'What time will it come on?' I diffidently query.

"'Six o'clock to the minute,' was the answer.

"'I will wait,' I replied, and again I was left alone to continue my observations.

"Over on the broad window seat is something under glass in a gilt frame. It is a most glowing description of the glories of 'Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese,' written by Jeems Pipes, of Pipesville.

"How I wish someone would tell me who that man is who has come to the pudding once every year for forty years, and always sits in the same seat. I have an uncomfortable conviction that the place I have chosen belongs to him, as I hear him utter to his companion: 'Must be an American reporter—fine example of American enterprise!' There comes a well-known *Times* writer, who takes the Goldsmith's corner to himself, remarking—'The last time I came to the pudding I was ill for three days, but the temptation is irresistible to try it again.'

"One at the next table utters—'Well, my sister has never dared to come in here, but has wanted to all her life, and now she shall. She will know how to enjoy it!'

"Every seat is occupied.

"'Tis just six.

"The door swings slowly open. A huge, round, white ball is borne aloft, high above the head of The Personage, who enters with slow and stately tread, followed in single file by six serious-faced attendants. The salver is tenderly lowered, and rests upon the table. Every eye is fixed upon it. The room is pervaded with perfect hush.

"The Personage solemnly receives a big spoon and knife from his first gentleman in waiting. The fateful moment has arrived. The pastry is broken. The gravy gently oozes over it.

"The Personage gravely approaches me and apolo-

gises for not serving me first, but 'really the middle portion will be safer for you,' he explained.

"The plates of the others were heaped upon. My time has come. There is my big dinner plate piled high with—what on earth! Birds! yes, tiny bits of birds, skylarks, kidneys, strips of beef just smothered in pastry like sea-foam, and dark brown gravy, steaming with fragrance, as seasoning.

"I arose to the exigencies of the occasion. A vision of the six-footer made ill for three days had no terrors for me. He had swallowed one plateful, and sent for another already.

"'Half-and-half'—British bitter and stout—in old-time pewter mugs was brought; out of deference to my sex, I suppose, a glass tumbler was placed before me, but I scorned to use it. Didn't Thackeray say it was worth a year's absence in far-away countries to realise the joy that filled one's soul upon returning to old England and quaffing her bitter from a pewter mug?

"Then came stewed cheese, on the thin shaving of crisp, golden toast in hot silver saucers—so hot that the cheese was of the substance of thick cream, the flavour of purple pansies and red raspberries commingled.

"There were only 400 skylarks put into the pudding made for the Prince of Wales at the banquet of the Forth Bridge opening in Edinburgh. How many thousands of the 'blithe spirits' have been put into the Cheshire Cheese pudding for 200 years?

"Shades of Shelley and Keats!

"The *Times* writer begins to smoke. My *vis-à-vis* asks if it will annoy me if he does likewise, and I answer briefly that my only annoyance consists in

not being one of the sex to whom such a treat just puts the dot of the I."

The *Globe* of January 15, 1884, alluding to the reported burning down of the Cheshire Cheese, remarked :—

"The consternation exhibited by the Knights of the Temple a few days ago, when it was reported that their favourite tavern, the Cheshire Cheese, in Wine Office Court, had been destroyed by fire, has prompted research into the history of some of these ancient resorts, which are, it is to be feared, disappearing daily before the more splendid hotels now rising up everywhere in town. The destruction of this tavern would, indeed, have been a serious calamity to the inhabitants of the dusky purlieu of the law. Thence arrive the famous lark puddings when they give a little dinner in their snug chambers. For years, since the beginning of the century at all events, it has been famous. Even Peter Cunningham does not give the date of its foundation, but the author of the 'Epicure's Almanac,' of the date 1815, thus writes of it: 'The first house on the right is the Cheshire Cheese, kept in high order by Mr. John Carlton, who now, as host, reposes from his labours as waiter, which office he, for many years, filled in this house with amazing dexterity and precision, to the universal satisfaction of all-comers. Customers who have long used the house meet, of course, with greater attention than strangers. The moment you enter you give your order to the waiter; he calls to the cook above with the voice of a Stentor. So great is the afflux of diners to the house between noon and six in the evening, that many persons find it convenient to call and order their dinner an hour or two before-

hand, go out to transact business, and then, on returning, their dinner is instantly served up smoking, and their porter foaming. The brandy, rum, and rack—vulgarly called gin—of this house are genuine ; so is the wine.’ This is, in a few words, an excellent description of the old taverns and their comforts.”

In *Society*, a series of articles was devoted to the description of famous restaurants and of the fare to be enjoyed within their walls. The writer, a brilliant Scots-Irishman, long an intimate of the “Cheese,” devotes not the least piquant of his descriptions to that immortal house. He writes : “ Christopher North chopped here, and has recorded his high opinion of its kitchen and its cellar. I fancy, however, that it was about the early *Punch* period that its real connection with journalism was ratified and the union consummated. Shirley Brooks has written pleasantly about it, Albert Smith has chaffed it, Edmund Yates has embalmed it in his ‘Reminiscences,’ and I have always had an idea that the Fleet Street chop-house in which poor Sydney Carton is found sitting in a semi-drunken condition is the Cheshire Cheese. Dickens, at all events, knew this place well, nor was it likely to escape a use of this sort. Mr. George Augustus Sala was a constant customer.”

Then follows the inevitable description of the pudding, which we may on this occasion spare the reader.

The *Freemason's Chronicle* of June 5, 1886, in reviewing an earlier edition of this little book, says :—

“ The praises of Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese, one of the most antiquated, and yet the most favourite, resorts in the city of London, have been sung by historians and poets through the whole of the last century, and quaint stories have been handed down to us

of scenes and incidents that have from time to time been enacted within the age-begrimed walls of this historic 'chop-house.' In these days of progress, when the links connecting us with the bygone history of Old London are being snapped one by one, and once familiar landmarks are being improved off the face of the City by modern innovations, it is refreshing to be able to sit down and con over the sayings and doings of eminent men who have left 'footprints on the sands of Time,' and whose names are immortalised in literature and song. This little volume brings us tête-a-tête with such sturdy intellects as those of Dr. Johnson, Boswell, Reynolds, Goldsmith, Burke, and a host of other 'men of the time,' who in their periods of leisure sought ease and refreshment at the 'Cheese,' and set the tables often in a roar with their pungent criticisms and flights of mirth and satire.

"It is because the 'Cheese' retains its own historic stamp that legal, literary and professional men 'most do congregate' there, and linger about its precincts with a sense of homeliness which attaches to no other hotel or restaurant in the City. Strange as may be the tales of old fogies who have reminiscences of the 'Cheese' for half a century or more, the traits so racily portrayed in the little volume before us carry back the history of ye olde tavern to still more interesting periods, when Shakespeare was a frequent looker-in, as he wended his way to, or returned from, the Blackfriars Theatre in Playhouse Yard; when

'CHARLES II. ATE A CHOP HERE

with Nell Gwynne;' while you can now have pointed out to you the seats used by Dr. Samuel Johnson,

Oliver Goldsmith, even to the marks on the wainscotted walls made by their greased wigs ; the corner where the author of 'Pendennis' and the 'Newcomes' sat ; or where Charles Dickens, Mark Lemon, Shirley Brooks, Douglas Jerrold, John Leech, and a host of others enjoyed their 'arf-and-'arf and toasted cheese. These recollections impart a flavour to the quaint old rendezvous such as cannot possibly be acquired by any modern tavern or restaurant, however gaudy and glittering may be their internal embellishments ; for, like old paintings and old wine, the 'Cheese' improves by keeping. The 'Cheese' has still its *habitués*, and on Saturday there is the famous rump-steak pudding, which draws a large attendance, for it is considered that you may search the wide world round without matching that succulent delicacy. Although we miss the genial form and face of the late B. A. Moore, whose prerogative it was to preside over this *chef-d'œuvre* of the culinary art, yet his place is filled by a worthy scion of the race, and the company, if not so garrulous or so boisterous as of yore, is still permeated by a sense of deep and affectionate loyalty to the 'old shop.'

"There is hardly a place on the civilised earth," says the *Bar Journal* of February 27, 1892, "where two or three cultured Englishmen are gathered together that the 'Cheshire Cheese' is not a household word. Whether it be on the inhospitable prairies of New Mexico, the luxuriantly vegetated cattle-ranches of Montana, or the mammoth wheat fields of Dakota, the fiery fields of India, the burning waste of Central Africa or its fever-stricken coasts, in all these places the exiled Englishman smokes his pipe, passes round the local diluted form of alcohol which is the current drink, and

talks of home and home comforts, and, it is safe to say, 'The dear old Cheshire Cheese' is often lovingly spoken of. The feature about the old place is that it is very nearly, if not absolutely, the last of the old taverns, and looks, and is conducted to-day precisely as it has been for any time during the last hundred years."

The *Globe* of September 23, 1887, says, "London itself bristles with associations of the great dead. The toil and moil of Fleet Street has tired you. Then turn up Wine Office Court and enter the Cheshire Cheese, where you may sit in the same seat, perchance drink out of the same glass, and if, like poor Oliver, you still ask for more, it is possible to rest your head on the identical spot of grease that Johnson's wig provoked on the bare wall."

In *Ally Sloper's Half Holiday* for December 17, 1892, some humorous sketches are given illustrating an alleged interview with Mr. Moore, of the "Cheese." The letterpress runs thus:—

"In consequence of the following appearing in a sporting contemporary: 'Mr. A. Sloper, the eminent *littérateur*, has consented, at the request of numerous friends, to compete on Wednesday next for the gold medal given by Mr. Charles Moore, the proprietor of the Old Cheshire Cheese, to whoever can put away six serves of his famous beef-steak, kidney, lark, and oyster pudding,' the renowned old house, crowded always on pudding days—namely, Wednesdays and Saturdays—was on this occasion literally packed with celebrities of every degree, rank, and station, who raised a ringing cheer as A. Sloper was conducted by his friend Charles Moore to the seat formerly in the occupation of Dr. Samuel Johnson.

Anon entered the Head Waiter Coles, and as A. Sloper felt he was in a room hallowed by wits past



THE WAY OUT—THREE FALCON COURT

and present, who had set the table in a roar, jocularly bubbled within him as he observed, 'Oh, Mr. Coles,

you are a funny man ! ' which pléasantry was received with icy *hauteur* by the important individual so addressed. Then Mr. Moore cut the pudding. After the second serve had been disposed of, the sprightly Sloper skipped from his seat and, like the youthful Twist, asked Moore for more. At the end of the third serve, which would have entitled him to a copper medal, a button flew off, and caught one of the guests, a famous actor, slap on the nose. At the end of the fourth (silver medal period) more buttons flew, and guests sat back ; but when the fifth plate of pudding had disappeared, A. Sloper, who hitherto had not turned one of his three hairs, appeared evidently distressed, and his backers looked anxious. ' Give him scope ! ' cried a well-known journalist who had backed him heavily. ' Push back the table a foot or so ! ' 'Twas done, and behold the sixth portion was a thing of the past. A. Sloper rose laboriously, but victorious."





CHAPTER XIII

CONCLUSION

I cannot tell how the truth may be ;
I tell the tale as 'twas told to me.—SCOTT

IN the preceding pages are recorded some of the traditions—well founded for the most part, I make no doubt—of frequenters of the Cheshire Cheese in the centuries passed away. The authentic history of the century now drawing to its close shows the ancient rooms illuminated by a galaxy of all that was eminent in literature, and art, and law. Here shone Christopher North (John Wilson), Dickens, Thackeray, John Forster (Dickens's biographer—that "arbitrary cove"), Douglas Jerrold, Albert Smith, Wilkie Collins, Edmund Yates, Sir Alexander Cockburn (Lord Chief Justice), William Edmonstoune Aytoun, Tom Hood and his son, Tom Hood the Second, George Augustus Sala, Andrew Halliday, the playwright, and Charles Mathews, the inimitable player, three Editors of *Punch*—Mark Lemon, Tom Taylor, and Shirley Brooks—and many more, besides the men of to-day from whom to make a selection were invidious.

One of the last generation, probably greater than the others, has gone over to the majority since the last edition of this book appeared. I mean Lord Tennyson, in chronicling whose death *Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper* of October 9, 1892, says :—

“Tennyson, in his young days, was a Fleet Streeter and a Bohemian of Bohemians. He was noted for the poetic emphasis of his dress, and the Parnassian width of hat-brim which he affected. Although the most temperate of drinkers, he frequented the cosy taverns of Fleet Street, and was well-known at the Cheshire Cheese. In his day the Cock tavern—upon which site the new branch of the Bank of England stands—had not parted with its ancient glory, and Tennyson used to dine there regularly. The young poet was addicted to a huge-bowled meerschaum pipe, and made a point of always smoking the strongest and most pungent of tobaccos. He deserted Fleet Street many years ago.”

Of Tom Hood, the younger, whose name would be much more widely known had he not been overshadowed by his father's fame, I should like to tell one little anecdote which I do not think has been published. When he was lying on his death bed the first editor of this book, his close personal friend, went to see him. He was still sprightly, and when Reid asked him what really was the matter, he replied, “The doctor says it is something wrong with my colon ; and I suppose it will soon put a period to me.”

It is now time to put a period to this compilation, which errs doubtless on the side of redundancy and discursiveness, but as the intention was to preserve in compendious form as many as possible of the

comments upon and allusions to the Olde Cheshire Cheese, an epitome was impossible, and discursiveness became a duty.

Here, if any reader, or good skipper, have followed me so far, he may not be unwilling that without longer delay I should bid him heartily and courteously

FAREWELL.



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B. A. MOORE & SON,

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WINE AND BRANDY IMPORTERS,
and
WHISKY MERCHANTS,

145 Fleet Street,

15, 16, & 17 Wine Office Court,

LONDON, E.C.

SOLE PROPRIETORS OF THE

Celebrated  Blended Whiskies.

Clarets.

	PER DOZ.
Fine Médoc, excellent quality	16/-
Pauillac, good sound wine, recommended	18/-
St. Estèphe, superior quality	21/-
St. Julien, fine flavour	25/-
Margaux, very fine growth, highly recommended	28/-
St. Emilion, rich dessert wine	36/-
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	L

Clarets—continued.

						PER DOZ.
Château Léognan, high-class wine	48/-
Do. Pontet Carnet, very superior rich wine	54/-
Do. Ferrière Margaux	...	...	...	...	...	60/-
Do. Gruaud Larose	...	...	...	...	...	72/-
Do. do. Vintage 1878	...	...	...	...	...	96/-
Do. Lafite	...	...	...	...	...	108/-
Do. Margaux	...	...	...	...	...	120/-

3/- extra for 24 half bottles.

Sauternes.

Graves, good sound wine	...	...	...	...	...	21/-
Barsac, fine quality, light delicate wine	...	...	...	...	...	24/-
Do. superior, very highly recommended	...	...	...	...	...	36/-
Haut Sauterne	...	...	...	...	...	42/-
Château Guiraud, bottled 1880	...	...	...	...	...	72/-
Do. d'Yquem, Vintage 1864	...	...	...	...	...	168/-

3/- extra for 24 half bottles.

Burgundies.

Santenay, red seal	...	...	...	...	...	21/-
Beaujolais, fine generous wine	...	...	...	...	...	25/-
Beaune, highly recommended	...	...	...	...	...	30/-
Pommard, fine vintage wine	...	...	...	...	...	45/-
Richebourg, very rich wine	...	...	...	...	...	56/-
Nuits, full of flavour, grand dessert wine	...	...	...	...	...	66/-
Romanée, very old bottled	...	...	...	...	...	84/-
Chambertin Clos de Bèze, bottled on the Estate	...	...	...	...	...	108/-
Clos de Vougeot, very fine old...	...	...	...	...	...	120/-

3/- extra for 24 half bottles.

White Burgundies.

Chablis	...	Special care has been used in bottling these wines, and they are all highly commended.	...	21/-
Pouilly	...		...	25/-
Meursault	...		...	36/-
Moutonne	...		...	50/-
Montrachet	...		...	66/-

3/- extra for 24 half bottles.

Sparkling Burgundies.

Red or white	...	...	...	...	...	...	PER DOZ. from 48/-
5/- extra for 24 half bottles.							

Sparkling Champagnes

Of the Saumur district.

Carte Noire	...	...	...	...	...	...	36/-
Do. Bleue	...	...	...	...	...	...	42/-
Dry Royal...	..	...	...	...	...	...	48/-
5/- extra for 24 half bottles.							

Various.

Capri, in Greek amphora bottles	...	...	...	...	...	30/-
Vesuvio do. do.	...	...	...	...	...	33/-
Marsala, very fine old, bottled 1880	...	...	...	...	...	36/-
Hermitage, very fine	...	...	...	...	...	48/-
Australian Wines, 'Harvest Burgundy' and others	...	...	...	...	from	24/-
Californian Wines, 'Zinfandel' and others	...	...	...	..	..	21/-
Bickford's Australian Lime Juice Cordial	...	...	...	...	...	30/-
4/- extra for 24 half pint.						

Champagnes.

Fine Sparkling, special shipment	...	...	...	...	50/-
Périnet et Fils, cuvée réservée, extra sec, and Brut, 1893	...	...	...	...	78/-
Do. do. do. 1889	...	...	...	...	84/-
Do. do. 1887 Vintage, very fine	...	...	...	...	96/-
Piper-Heidsieck 'Très-Sec,' 1889	...	...	...	...	84/-
Mœt et Chandon, white dry Sillery (old landed)	...	...	...	...	72/-
Do. dry Imperial, 1889 Vintage	...	...	...	...	96/-
Perrier Jouet, pale dry creaming (old landed)	...	...	...	...	78/-
Do. extra quality, 1889 Vintage	...	...	...	...	98/-
St. Marceaux, Vintage 1893, extra quality	...	...	...	80/-	96/-
Do. do. 1889	...	...	...	...	96/-

Champagnes—continued.

	PER DOZ.
Louis Roederer, carte blanche	90/-
Veuve Clicquot, rich or dry, Vintage 1889	96/-
H. Piper, sec or très sec	88/-
G. H. Mumm & Co.	78/-
Do. 1889 Vintage	96/-
Theo. Roederer & Co., 1884 Vintage	96/-
Heidsieck's dry Monopole	90/-
Pommery & Gréno, 1889 Vintage	100/-
Do. 1884 do.	126/-
Lanson Père et Fils (very old landed), Vintage 1874	120/-
Deutz & Geldermann (old landed), 1889	90/-
Jules Mumm & Co., 1889 Vintage	96/-
Wachter & Co., Royal Charter, 1887	96/-

6/- extra for 24 half bottles.

We can give quotations for other Brands, and have also small parcels of
SOME VERY OLD VINTAGES.

Sherries.

Fine Pale wine	30/-
Superior Old, in bottle	33/-
Do. fine dry, delicate flavour	36/-
Do. fine flavour and rich character	42/-
Old Bottled, rich nutty flavour, green seal. Special wine	48/-
Manzanilla, very fine and dry	54/-
Very fine, dry, old bottled (Davilla)	66/-
Do. Golden do.	72/-
Old Solera, Vintage 1865, Domecq, bottled 1876	86/-
Delicate Vino de Pasto, bottled 1876	96/-
Fine old Amontillado, Domecq, bottled 1876	108/-

Fine old Brown Sherry	48/-
Do. old bottled	60/- to 100/-
Old Canary Sack... ..	72/-

Rota Tcnt, old in bottle	48/-
---------------------------------	------

3/- extra for 24 half bottles.

Madeiras.

	PER DOZ.
Fine ordinary	36/-
Very fine full flavour	54/-
Rich old wine	72/-
Very choice old Vintage	120/-

3/- extra for 24 half bottles.

Ports.

Fine Wine, excellent quality	30/-
Superior, good crust	36/-
Fine flavour, rich good colour	42/-
Full do. highly recommended	48/-
Superior Old Dry (Martinez light)	54/-
Very fine Old flavour (Sandeman's), No. 7	60/-
Do. Old White Port (curious)	60/-
Do. rich fruity high class wine	66/-
Do. (delicate light), very choice, No. 8	72/-
Superior vintage 1889	48/-
Do. do. 1887 (Jubilee year)	54/-
Do. do. (Magnums)	108/-
Do. do. 1884	60/-
Do. do. (Magnums)	120/-
Do. do. 1881	66/-
Do. do. (Magnums)	130/-
Do. do. 1878	72/-
Do. do. (Magnums)	144/-
Do. do. 1875	80/-
Do. do. (Magnums)	160/-
Do. do. 1870 (Reserve, very fine)	96/-
Do. do. 1868	120/-
Do. do. 1863	144/-
Do. do. 1847	180/-

3/- extra for 24 half bottles.

(Other Vintages upon application.)

Rhenish Wines.

Niersteiner	21/-
Hocheimer	25/-

Rhenish Wines—continued.

	PER	DOZ.
Geisenheimer, 1890	36/-
Asmannshausen, 1889, red	38/-
Rüdesheimer-Engerwegar, 1889	43/-
Liebfraumilch	56/-
Marcobrunner	70/-
Rauenthaler	74/-
Rüdesheimer Cabinet, 1883	96/-
Schloss Johannisberg, bottled 1868	132/-
Steinwein in Boxbeutels...	36/-
Do. Auslese	54/-

3/- extra for 24 half bottles.

Sparkling Rhenish.

Sparkling Hock ... ..	...	46/-
Do. do. Nonpareil, special shipment ... ..	...	60/-
Do. Moselle ... ..	...	46/-
Do. do. Nonpareil, special shipment ... ..	...	60/-
Do. Johannisberg, very choice ... ..	...	66/-

5/- extra for 24 half bottles.

Foreign Liqueurs.

	PER	BOT.
Maraschino di Zara, Drioli's	8/6
Curaçoa, Fokink's	8/6
Do. dry in Marteaux	8/6
Do. Ghesquier in Cruchons	9/6
Grande Chartreuse (from the Monastery), yellow	10/6
Do. do. do. green	12/6
Trappistine (from the Abbey), yellow...	9/-
Do. do. do. green	11/-
Benedictine	9/6
Cherry Brandy, Herring's	5/-
Elixir de Pompei	7/-
Parfait Amour	7/-
Crème de Cacao	7/6
Aqua d'Oro Dantzig	9/6
Absinthe Litres	8/-
Kirchenwasser, Black Forest	8/-
Angostura Bitters	per pint	3/6



Foreign Liqueurs—continued.

								PER BOT.
Milk Punch	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5/-
Vermouth	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3/-
Kümmel-Riga	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6/-
Danvita (Tonic Bitters)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3/6
Khoosh Bitters	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3/-

Some of the above can be had in half bottles.

British and Foreign Spirits.

Sole Proprietors of the Celebrated O.C.C. blended Whiskies.

					PER GAL.	PER DOZ.	PER BOT.	STONE BOT.
Whisky, Scotch, the		blend			21/-	42/-	3/8	4/-
Do.	do.	reserve	do.	...	24/-	48/-	4/2	4/6
Whisky, Irish, the		blend			21/-	42/-	3/8	4/-
Do.	do.	reserve	do.	...	24/-	48/-	4/2	4/6
The above in Old-fashioned Jugs, per imperial quart (specialty), 5/6 and 6/6.								
John Jameson, 15 years old	...	...	...	...	27/-	54/-	4/6	5/-
Old Pepper Whisky, finest imported from								
America	...	...	...	...	—	108/-	9/6	—
Canadian Club Whisky	...	...	...	...	—	54/-	4/6	—
Gin, fine, unsweetened	...	...	...	...	15/-	30/-	2/8	3/-
Do. do.	do.	(17 u.p.)	...	...	16/-	32/-	3/-	3/6
Rum, Jamaica, fine old	...	...	...	...	20/-	40/-	3/6	4/-
Do. do.	finest old,	very choice	...	...	24/-	48/-	4/2	4/6
Brandy, Brown, fine old	...	...	...	...	30/-	60/-	5/2	5/6
Do. do.	very choice	...	...	...	36/-	72/-	6/2	6/6
Do. do.	do.	1869	...	...	48/-	96/-	8/2	8/6
Brandy, Pale, fine old	...	...	...	...	30/-	60/-	5/2	5/6
Do. do.	very choice	...	...	...	36/-	72/-	6/2	6/6
Do. do.	do.	1869	...	...	48/-	96/-	8/2	8/6
Hollands, De Kuyper, old landed					18/-	36/-	3/-	—

Small Sherry Casks always in stock for customers desiring their Whisky in Wood.

British Liqueurs.

						PER DOZ.	PER BOT.
Peppermint, Cloves, Shrub, Noyeau	...	...	...	...	...	28/-	2/6
Ginger Brandy	...	...	...	...	...	45/-	4/-
Orange Bitters	...	...	...	...	...	28/-	2/6
Grant's Cherry Brandy	...	...	...	...	...	40/-	3/6
Do. do. do. (Sportsman's quality)	...	...	...	...	...	50/-	4/6
Do. do. Bounce	...	...	...	...	...	45/-	4/-
Sloe Gin, very choice	...	...	...	...	...	40/-	3/6
Red Cross Liqueur Bitters	...	...	...	...	...	48/-	—

AGENTS FOR

MARSTON & SON'S and THOMAS SALT & CO.'S CELEBRATED PALE AND BURTON ALES.

						Per kil. 18 gall.
Finest Pale Ale (O.C.C. quality)	...	...	...	...	...	33/-
Fine Old Mild	...	...	...	...	...	30/-
Do. No. 5	...	...	...	...	...	27/-
Do. No. 4 (recommended)	...	...	...	...	...	21/-
Do. No. 3 (Luncheon Ale), light and bright	...	...	...	...	...	18/-
Finest Double Stout (O.C.C. quality)	33/-

Families supplied with above qualities in 9-gall. Casks.

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**Large Cabinets of the Choicest Brands of Cigars
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Spirit bottles, jars, hampers, cases, and casks charged as follows, and allowed in full when returned :—

Spirit Bottles	...	...	...	...	per doz.	...	2/-
Bin Cases and Hampers	do.	...	2/-
Jars	per gal.	...	1/6

Wine and Spirit Casks, according to size.

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Of this
Delicate
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WINE
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Celebrated
Vintages of
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BANQUETS.

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED.

Visitors not knowing the Brand are invited to give it a Trial.

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F. H. CLEMOW, Proprietor.

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COMMERCIAL AND FAMILY HOTEL,
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One Minute from Ludgate Circus (Cook's Offices).

*Three Minutes' walk to St. Paul's Cathedral, G.P.O.,
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							s.	d.
Bed (for one)	3	0
Do. (for two)	4	6
Plain Breakfast or Tea	1	6
Meat do. do. Steaks, Chops, or Fish, &c.	2	0
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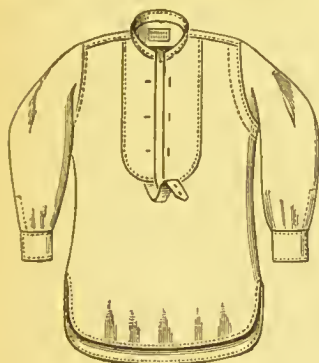
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„ 4-FOLD LINEN COLLARS 6d.; 2/9 the ½-dozen.

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Old and Crusted	all sold	...	1 11 6	1 1 0
Over the Nuts and Wine	all sold	...	1 11 6	1 1 0
Home Brewed	8 8 0	...	1 11 6	1 1 0
Darby and Joan	all sold	...	1 11 6	1 1 0
For Fifty Years	all sold	2 2 0	1 11 6	1 1 0
When we were Boys together	5 5 0	2 2 0	1 11 6	1 1 0
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Returning Thanks	6 6 0	4 4 0	3 3 0	2 2 0
For He's a Jolly Good Fellow	all sold	4 4 0	3 3 0	2 2 0
Memories	5 5 0	2 2 0	1 11 6	1 1 0
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In the Camp of the Amalekites	6 6 0	3 3 0	...	2 2 0
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Chance Companions	5 5 0
Where the Widow Lives	all sold	2 2 0	1 11 6	0 15 0
Who is It?	3 3 0	2 2 0	1 11 6	0 15 0
The Widow at Home	3 3 0	2 2 0	1 11 6	0 15 0
His Favourite Bin	3 3 0	2 2 0	1 11 6	1 1 0
The Butler's Glass	3 3 0	2 2 0	1 11 6	1 1 0
A Doubtful Bottle	all sold	2 2 0	1 11 6	1 1 0
A Breach of Promise	5 5 0	2 2 0	1 11 6	1 1 0
Toddy at the Cheshire Cheese	5 5 0	2 2 0	1 11 6	1 1 0
<hr/>				
A Pegged-down Fishing Match	5 5 0	...	1 11 6	1 1 0
A-Hunting We'll Go	3 3 0	...	1 11 6	1 1 0
The Punch-bowl—A Mystery	3 3 0	...	1 11 6	1 1 0
The Rivals	5 5 0	...	...	1 1 0
The Victim	5 5 0	...	...	1 1 0
The Middleman	5 5 0	...	...	1 1 0
First of September	all sold	...	...	1 1 0
Uninvited Guests	5 5 0	...	...	1 1 0
Hearts are Trumps	5 5 0	...	...	1 1 0
Wrong Side of the Edge	5 5 0	...	...	1 1 0
The Widow's Birthday	all sold	...	...	1 1 0
Scandal and Tea	5 5 0	2 2 0	...	1 1 0
Dummy Whist	all sold	2 2 0	...	1 1 0
Stuffing is good for Geese	1 1 0

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v91

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SHAKESPEARE (*Timon of Athens*).

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UNDER
ROYAL WARRANTS



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HER MAJESTY
THE QUEEN,

AND TO H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES.

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